

Open Research Online

The Open University's repository of research publications and other research outputs

The Role of Caste in Prostitution: Culture and Violence in the Life Histories of Prostitutes in India

Thesis

How to cite:

Rozario, Mary Rita (1998). The Role of Caste in Prostitution: Culture and Violence in the Life Histories of Prostitutes in India. MPhil thesis. The Open University.

For guidance on citations see [FAQs](#).

© 1998 The Author

Version: Version of Record

Copyright and Moral Rights for the articles on this site are retained by the individual authors and/or other copyright owners. For more information on Open Research Online's data [policy](#) on reuse of materials please consult the policies page.

oro.open.ac.uk

THE ROLE OF CASTE IN PROSTITUTION:

**CULTURE AND VIOLENCE IN THE LIFE HISTORIES OF
PROSTITUTES IN INDIA**

by

Sr. Mary Rita Rozario, R.G.S.

**A thesis submitted to the Open University United Kingdom
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
Degree of Master of Philosophy**

**The Oxford Centre for Mission Studies
Oxford, UK**

April, 1997

ProQuest Number:27696842

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 27696842

Published by ProQuest LLC (2019). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

This copy of the thesis has been supplied on condition that anyone who consults it is understood to recognise that its copyright rests with the author and that no quotation from the thesis, nor any information derived therefrom, may be published without the author's prior written consent.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am immensely grateful to Rev. Dr. Vinay Samuel (Executive Director), Rev. Dr. Christopher Sugden (Director of Academic Affairs), Dr. Kwame Bediako (Chairman), Mr. Simon J. Lumby (Registrar), Ms. Hilary Guest (Assistant Registrar), Ms. Jane Martin (Editor), Ms. Korklu Laryea (Librarian) and staff, the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, U.K., for the academic, financial and all assistance extended to me during the course of this research in India, Holland and United Kingdom.

My appreciation and gratitude goes to Dr. Marcus Banks (Director of Studies), Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Oxford, United Kingdom; Dr. Thanh-Dam Truong (Supervisor) Institute of Social Sciences, The Hague, The Netherlands; and Dr. Paul Freston (Supervisor), The Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, Oxford, United Kingdom, for helping to shape many of the ideas in this research with critical acumen, efficient guidance, sympathetic support and steadfast commitment to the completion of this study.

I owe my thanks to the Director (Caritas, The Netherlands) and Ms. Miep Beuving (Secretary, Caritas, The Netherlands) for the financial, academic and all assistance extended during the period of my stay in India, The Netherlands and United Kingdom. My thanks to Dr. Jan Visser (De Graff Foundation, Amsterdam), Dr. Thanh-Dam Truong (Institute of Social Sciences, The Hague) and Rev. Fr. Alexis, O.F.M (Utrecht) for their academic, library and all services extended during my stay in Holland and U.K. My sincere thanks to Bryden Black (Australia) for his financial assistance for this study in U.K and India.

I am deeply indebted and grateful to the women and girls in prostitution in India who shared their life experiences generously. At this moment I recall with love and gratitude, the memory of those women and girls who having shared their life experiences have passed away during the course of this study, with the hope that other women and girls in India may have a better life in the Indian society.

I am grateful to Professor Saral Chatterji and Mrs. Jyotsna Chatterji (CISRS & JWP, New Delhi) for permitting me to use the data collected for my study; to Professor P. Ramachandran (Head of the Department of Research Methodology, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Trombay, Mumbai), for providing me the necessary guidance during my study in Mumbai. My thanks to Dr. Hazel D'Lima (Director, College of Social Sciences, Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai), Desai (Director, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Trombay, Mumbai) and Director, S.N.D.T College, Mumbai, for the use of their College libraries.

My special thanks to Mrs. Rosemary and Mr. Jeremy Herklots, Oxford, U.K for their patient computer services and contribution in regard to printing and binding works.

I am immensely grateful to Sr. Liliane Tauvette (Superior General of the Good Shepherd sisters, Rome, Italy), Sr. Sabina Pathrose (Provincial, India) and sisters, Sr. Lucina Wagon (Provincial, U.K) and sisters, for extending the necessary permissions, financial assistance and services during the course of this study. I sincerely thank my family (my sister Ms. Violet Rozario who passed away during this study) and my relatives in India and U.K for all assistance given me from the inception of this study.

There are many who have offered me help and support in numerous capacities over the years of my study in order not to leave any of them I wish to express my gratitude to this group who have on their own way been of incalculable assistance.

CONTENTS

PART I

CHAPTER 1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	OBJECT OF THE STUDY	10
1.2	PROSTITUTION AND PROSTITUTE/THE QUESTION OF DEFINITION	10
1.3	PROSTITUTION AND PROSTITUTE IN INDIA TODAY	14
1.3.1	Prostitution viewed as a female phenomenon	14
1.3.2	The association of heterosexuality with prostitution	15
1.3.3	The association of males as clients and females as prostitutes	16
1.3.4	The idea of males (involved in prostitution) as economically independent and females (involved in prostitution) as economically dependent	16
1.3.5	The association of transvestites with female prostitutes	17
1.3.6	The law related to prostitution in India and female prostitutes	17
1.3.7	The association of penal measures with female prostitutes	17
1.3.8	Dichotomization of adult and child prostitution	18
1.3.9	Adult prostitution seen as free from violence	19
1.3.10	The association of Scheduled Castes with prostitution	20
1.4	CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS AND TERMINOLOGIES RELATED TO CASTE	20
1.4.1	The concept of caste	20
1.4.2	Caste and power	22
1.4.3	Caste, class and political power	22
1.4.4	Brahmins, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudras (Sudras) and the Scheduled Castes	23
1.4.5	Depressed classes, Harijans, Scheduled Castes/Dalits	24
1.4.6	Caste 'not applicable'	25
1.4.7	Caste and the Indian Constitution	25
1.5	CULTURE AND VIOLENCE IN THE DAY TO DAY LIFE OF THE SCHEDULED CASTES IN THE INDIAN SOCIETY	26
1.5.1	The situation of Scheduled Caste men, women and children	26
1.5.2	The situation of Scheduled Caste women and children in India today	27
1.5.3	'Passivity' in the face of marginalization and exploitation	27
1.6	THE SITUATION OF WOMAN AND GIRLS IN INDIA TODAY DESPITE THEIR HIGH LEGAL STATUS	30
1.6.1	Reasons presented for legalization of prostitution in India	31

1.7	STUDIES AND THEORIES RELATED TO CAUSATIVE FACTORS FOR ENTRY INTO PROSTITUTION	32
1.8	STUDIES RELATED TO PROSTITUTION IN INDIA	35
1.9	THE RATIONALE OF THIS STUDY	36
1.9.1	'Born prostitute', 'black', and 'primitive' theories	36
1.10	ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND THE UNDERLYING PHILOSOPHY OF THIS STUDY	37
1.11	THE ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY	42
CHAPTER 2	METHODOLOGY	47
2.1	NEED FOR AN APPROPRIATE METHODOLOGY	50
2.2	SCRUTINY OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES	53
2.2.1	Conventional research methodology	53
2.2.2	Ethnography	53
2.2.3	Participatory research methodology	54
2.2.4	The narrative study of lives research methodology	54
2.3	CHOICE OF ECLECTIC METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH	54
2.3.1	Formulation of an interview schedule	55
2.3.2	Place of interview	57
2.3.3	Typologies of prostitution	61
2.3.4	The 'working hours' of prostitutes	61
2.4	PREPARATION OF THE ASSISTANT FOR FIELD WORK	62
2.5	PREPARATION OF THE RESEARCHER FOR FIELD WORK	63
2.6	AN EXPERIENCE OF DATA COLLECTION	64
2.7	DISAPPEARANCE OF THE FIELD ASSISTANT	68
2.8	INTERVIEWS IN INSTITUTIONAL SETTING	69
2.9	LIMITATIONS OF INTERVIEWING RESPONDENTS IN INSTITUTIONAL SETTINGS	70
2.10	A NON-INDIAN OFFERING TO ACCOMPANY ME FOR DATA COLLECTION	70
2.11	ARREST OF MY SECOND FIELD WORK ASSISTANT	71

2.12	AREA OF DATA COLLECTION AND SAMPLE SIZE	73
2.12.1	Table 3: Place of data collection and sample size	73
2.12.2	Table 4: Area of data collection: the four year national study (1983-86)	74
2.13	QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF DATA COLLECTION	76
2.14	OPPORTUNISTIC SAMPLING TECHNIQUE	76
2.15	CODING, TABULATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS	77
2.16	CALL FOR HUMANITARIAN SERVICE AT THE TIME OF DATA COLLECTION	78
2.17	THE HUMAN AND PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION TO DATA COLLECTION	79
CHAPTER 3	CASTE, GENDER AND SEXUALITY	80
3.1	INTRODUCTION	80
3.2	CASTE	81
3.3	ONE SOCIETY, ONE CULTURE	84
3.4	COMPLEX SOCIETIES	84
3.5	CONCEPT OF PURITY-POLLUTION	86
3.6	WOMEN, CASTE AND GENDER	87
3.7	GENDER	87
3.7.1	Inversion of value and power in relation to women	88
3.7.2	The paradox of virgin and whore	89
3.8	DUAL PERCEPTION OF FEMALENESS: SEXUALITY	91
3.8.1	Women as sakti	91
3.8.2	Subjugation of women legitimized	91
3.8.3	Perception of women's nature as deceitful and evil	92
3.9	PREFERENCE FOR A SON IN THE FAMILY/REJECTION OF A GIRL CHILD	93
3.10	PROVISION OF DUAL INSTITUTIONS: MARRIAGE AND PROSTITUTION	93

3.11	AGRESSIVENESS OF MALE SEXUALITY	94
3.12	MALE SEXUAL EXCESSES CONDONED/FEMALE CHASTITY DEMANDED	95
3.13	STUDIES RELATED TO WOMEN AND CASTE	97
3.14	SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STATUS IN RELATION TO CASTE	97
3.14.1	The nexus of caste-class in Indian society	98
3.14.2	Caste-class-politics in the Indian situation	99
3.15	MORALITY	99
3.16	STUDIES RELATED TO SCHEDULED CASTES	100
3.16.1	Culture theory: outcaste images	101
3.16.2	Culture theory: models of diversity	102
3.17	POWER THEORY	104
3.18	IMPACT OF THE GRID OF CASTE-GENDER-SEXUALITY ON WOMEN, ESPECIALLY ON THE SCHEDULED CASTES	106
3.19	MALE AGGRESSIVENESS AND FEMALE PASSIVITY	108
3.20	CONCLUSION	108
CHAPTER 4	A BRIEF HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF PROSTITUTION IN INDIA	112
	INTRODUCTION	112
4.1	DICHOTOMY BETWEEN THE BENEVOLENT AND THE MALEVOLENT	113
4.2	DICHOTOMY BETWEEN THE ROLE EXPECTATION OF MARRIED WOMEN AND WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION	114
4.3	HIERARCHY AMONG PROSTITUTES	115
4.4	LINK BETWEEN THE HIERARCHY OF PROSTITUTES AND THEIR ROLES	116
4.5	STATE ORGANIZED PROSTITUTION AND SYNONYMS FOR PROSTITUTES	117

4.6	HIERARCHY OF PROSTITUTES LINKED WITH GRADED SECURITY OF AFFAIRS	118
4.7	METICULOUS CLASSIFICATION OF MEN IN SOCIETY AND WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION	119
4.8	ATTITUDE TOWARDS PROSTITUTES AND PROSTITUTION	119
4.9	EXPLOITATION OF PROSTITUTES	121
4.10	PROSTITUTION DURING THE MOGHUL PERIOD	123
4.11	PROSTITUTION IN INDIA DURING THE BRITISH PERIOD	123
4.12	LAL BAZAARS AND LOCK HOSPITALS	124
4.13	ANTI-NAUTCH CAMPAIGNS DURING THE BRITISH PERIOD	125
4.14	ATTEMPTS TO ABOLISH BROTHELS IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY	126
4.15	PROSTITUTION IN INDIA: POST-INDEPENDENCE ERA	127
4.15.1	The extent of prostitution in India today	127
4.16	CONCLUSION	129

PART II

CHAPTER 5	RECRUITMENT	135
5.1	INTRODUCTION	135
5.1.1	'Sacred' prostitution and recruitment: the Devadasi system	137
5.1.2	Jogtis or Yoginis, and Devadasis	139
5.1.3	Devadasis and Basavis	139
5.1.4	Nexus of caste in relation to 'sacred' prostitution	140
5.1.5	Myths related to caste factor in 'sacred' prostitution	140
5.1.6	The process of recruitment	143
5.1.6.1	Dedication decided and carried out by parent(s) or guardian(s)	143
5.1.6.2	Vows taken to dedicate the daughter by their parents	147
5.1.6.3	Development of jat	149
5.1.7	Devadasis in the family	150
5.1.8	Low literacy	151
5.1.9	Scheduled Caste women: the less educated and those in low paid jobs	152
5.1.10	Socio-economic and cultural factors	154

5.1.11	The farmer's family who 'took a fancy for the girl'	154
5.1.12	Devadasi system: a recruitment system	155
5.2	TRADITIONAL PROSTITUTION: SINGING AND DANCING GIRLS, CABARET ARTISTS	158
5.2.1	Trained in singing and dancing	159
5.2.2	Recruitment of the child made by kith and kin	159
5.2.3	For the Upper Castes alone	160
5.2.4	In the context of marriage	161
5.2.5	For the benefit of Upper Caste men/nobles -- the rich	161
5.3	CONTEMPORARY PROSTITUTION	168
5.3.1	Prostitution in red light areas	168
5.3.2	Clandestine prostitution	169
5.3.3	The role of caste in recruitment	170
5.3.4	Trafficking and the trafficked	171
5.3.5	Qualities of an ideal wife: expectations challenged	172
5.3.6	Traffickers and the trafficked	174
5.4	CULTURE AND VIOLENCE IN THE LIFE-HISTORIES OF PROSTITUTES	177
5.5	IMPACT OF RECRUITMENT ON PROSTITUTES	179
5.6	CONCLUSION	180
CHAPTER 6	INITIATION	183
6.1	'SACRED' PROSTITUTION: INITIATION	184
6.1.1	The socio-economic dimension of initiation	187
6.1.2	The myth of defloration for cure of venereal diseases (AIDS)	188
6.1.3	Initiation from the perspective of the child	189
6.1.4	The role of caste in sacred prostitution: initiation	189
6.1.5	The socio-cultural and power nexus in initiation of the 'sacred' prostitute	190
6.1.6	Women and their bodies	191
6.1.7	The 'touching ceremony'	192
6.1.8	Purity vs auspiciousness	192
6.1.9	Virginity and purity vs non-virginity and impurity	193
6.1.10	Demand for virgins	193
6.1.11	Health conditions and initiation	194
6.1.12	The Upper Caste-Scheduled Caste nexus in initiation	194
6.2	THE TRADITIONAL SINGING AND DANCING GIRLS PROSTITUTION: INITIATION	198
6.3	CONTEMPORARY PROSTITUTION: INITIATION	203

6.4	SOCIALIZATION	206
6.5	VICTIMIZATION	208
6.6	AGE FACTOR	209
6.7	CHILDHOOD IN THE INDIAN TRADITION	212
6.8	CONCLUSION	212
CHAPTER 7	BROTHEL LIFE	216
7.1	INTRODUCTION	216
7.2	PROSTITUTION/PROSTITUTE/BROTHEL/BROTHEL-KEEPING	217
7.2.1	Brothel organization (with special reference to Bombay)	218
7.3	BROTHEL STRUCTURE / CLASSIFICATION OF PROSTITUTES/DISCRIMINATION IN BROTHELS BASED ON CASTE	222
7.4	THE 'INTERNAL' RELATIONSHIP AND THE 'EXTERNAL' RESULTS IN THE EXPERIENCE OF CULTURE AND VIOLENCE	223
7.4.1	The lower the cultural status, the greater the violence inflicted on them	223
7.4.2	Denial of motherhood and right over the child	225
7.4.3	Procurers, jewellers, saree sellers, money lenders, liquor sellers suppliers, transport personnel and hired men in the brothel setting	227
7.5	THE NEXUS BETWEEN THE UPPER CASTE/CLASS CLIENTS AND THE UPPER CASTE/CLASS PROSTITUTES	227
7.5.1	Supply of women and girls for Upper Caste/Class clients	227
7.5.2	Hierarchy among clientele and various brothel settings	228
7.5.3	Collaboration of men in creating prostitutes/rejects in Indian society	229
7.6	WOMEN EXPLOITING WOMEN/THE ROLE OF CASTE WOMEN IN INDIAN SOCIETY	230
7.7	TARDY IMPLEMENTATION OF LAW	230

CHAPTER 8	DESTINY	231
8.1	INTRODUCTION	231
8.2	DESTINY OR THE FOURTH PHASE OF A PROSTITUTE'S LIFE CLARIFIED	234
8.2.1	Culture-violence-power	237
8.2.2	Culture mystifies and masks violence	238
8.2.3	The web of culture-violence-power implicit in the system of 'sacred' prostitution	238
8.2.4	The dominant castes maintain power whilst the Scheduled Caste girl becomes a 'scape-goat' for violence	239
8.2.5	Possible transformation in relation to 'sacred' prostitution in India	239
8.3	DESTINY OR THE FOURTH PHASE IN RELATION TO SINGING AND DANCING GIRLS PROSTITUTION	241
8.3.1	Future of the traditional singing and dancing girls' form of prostitution	243
8.3.2	Literacy rate of the Scheduled Castes	243
8.3.3	The cabaret artists	244
8.3.4	Impact of venereal diseases/AIDS on the lives of prostitutes in India	246
8.4	DESTINY OR THE FOURTH PHASE IN RELATION TO PROSTITUTION IN RED LIGHT AREAS	249
8.4.1	Cultural factors for the Upper Caste women and girls leaving their homes	250
8.4.2	Bigamy, polygamy, sexual excesses	250
8.4.3	Double standards of morality challenged	251
8.4.4	Custom of seclusion of women and girls posing a barrier	251
8.4.5	Economic and cultural factors for the Scheduled Caste women and girls leaving their home	252
8.5	PROSTITUTES' CHILDREN AND INSTITUTIONAL CARE SERVICES	253
8.6	PROSTITUTES CAST OUT BY SOCIETY	255
8.7	PROSTITUTES OBLIVIOUS OF THEIR SURROUNDINGS	255
8.8	THE RIGHT TO A PROSTITUTION-FREE SOCIETY	256
8.9	RESPONSE TO THE SITUATION OF PROSTITUTION IN INDIA	256
8.10	TO SHAPE THE FORCES THAT RESHAPED THEIR LIVES	263

PART III

CHAPTER 9	CONCLUSION	265
------------------	-------------------	------------

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I	NATIONAL EFFORTS: CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS	273
APPENDIX II	INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	277
APPENDIX III	CONSOLIDATED DATA	284
APPENDIX IV	THEY ARE HUMAN LIKE YOU AND ME	290
APPENDIX V	THE HOLISTIC APPROACH	292
APPENDIX VI	RECEPTION CENTRE	293
APPENDIX VII	IMPACT OF THIS STUDY ON MY LIFE	294
	RECOMMENDATIONS	295

BIBLIOGRAPHY	302
---------------------	------------

LIST OF TABLES, MAPS, SKETCHES AND DIAGRAMS (MODELS)

TABLES

Table 1	Total population and percentage of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe -- 1991	xv
Table 2	A state-wise break-down of rape cases reported from 1986 to 1988, according to the Home Ministry	29
Table 3	Place of data collection and sample size	73
Table 4	Area of data collection: the four-year national study	74
Table 5	Place of prostitution of 125 respondents of Mumbai	75

Table 6	Atrocities against Untouchables 1997-1998	166
Table 7	Persons responsible for entry into prostitution	178
Table 8	Mode of initiation into prostitution	209

MAPS

Map 1	India, Scheduled Castes, 1991	28
Map 2	Mumbai	58
Map 3	Greater Bombay	59

SKETCHES

Sketch 1	A brothel in Mumbai	67
Sketch 2	Reception centre	293

DIAGRAM (MODEL)

Model 1	Social statification of contemporary Indian society	85
---------	-----------------------------------------------------	----

I declare that the contents of this thesis is my own work except where due reference is made to other authors. In case I have overlooked to provide due reference to one or more authors in the thesis I apologize. Some of the names and details of persons who temporarily assisted me in my field work or contributed their life histories have been changed or suppressed for confidentiality and to provide safety.

ABSTRACT

The caste system prevalent in Indian society has never been studied with respect to its role in prostitution. This critical and analytical study of the role of caste in prostitution in India is the result of over thirty years of observation both within the institution of prostitution, that is, in its 'internal' relationships; and outside the institution in the 'external' relationships which create violence in the lives of prostitutes in India. The caste system which plays a major role in the life of Indians has a role in prostitution yet this issue remains unexplored by scholars.

Even when focusing on Scheduled Caste women, amongst whom most prostitutes number, the issue treated has been mainly that of economics, rather than those of culture and violence in their lives. The scope of study is restricted to women and girls alone, in keeping with the focus of the services of the Good Shepherd sisters (of whom the author is one) throughout the world.

Under the prevailing caste system people are stratified into groups and the relationships among them is specified. The Scheduled Caste is one of the groups that exist outside the caste system in India and it numbers 138.2 million (Census India 1991).

This study is based on three pairs of dichotomous concepts: the 'Upper Castes' (the 'pure') and the Scheduled Castes (the 'impure'); the males (the 'supreme' gender) and the females (the 'inferior' gender); male sexuality contextualized as the 'human sexuality' and female sexuality conceptualized as 'good' and 'evil' with dual perception. It indicates how persons are casteized, genderized and sexualized in the Indian society. It highlights parallels between the Upper Castes' domination (concentration and exercise of power) over the Scheduled Castes (or the 'Untouchables') and between the lower position held by the Scheduled Castes and their experience of violence in Indian society.

The data of my study consists of that gathered by interviewing prostitutes in specific surveys (three studies from 1983-90) and also from my practical experience of working with women and girls in prostitution for two decades (1962-82).

The analysis of prostitution is set against the accepted wisdom which perceive the entry of all women and girls into prostitution for economic reasons, and against the Indian situation in which the country still faces the problems of dehumanized Scheduled Castes and grinding poverty. To see prostitution as a consequence of economic necessity, though accepted in many societies, remains controversial in the context of Indian society.

In some societies prostitution is a form of labour and the economic cause is argued on the basis of financial autonomy, self-determination and occupation of choice for women. This study takes the stance that economic arguments alone are not universally acceptable and are generally not appropriate to the whole range of the entry of Scheduled Caste women and girls in prostitution in India.

My study attempts to fill the gap left by previous studies by using my experience and an evaluation of a sample of women and girls in prostitution from various cultural backgrounds to illustrate the effectiveness of culture and violence in the lives of Indian prostitutes.

The caste structure not only stratifies the Indian society, but also defines status, relationships and sexuality. This has major implications for the issues of power and violence between groups as they relate to one another.

There exists a web of relationships between culture-violence-power that uses culture to mask violence; the 'internal'-'external' relationships which involve controlling and rejecting

assimilation of prostitutes in the mainstream of life in society creating violence; the bond of friendship between the Upper Caste/Class men and women in the prostitute world which leads to exploitation of the Scheduled Caste women and girls; the exploitation of women by women for their survival; the role of caste and the dynamics of culture that contribute to the perpetuation of prostitution in India. The upper caste/class clients forming the first clients and patrons to exploit the girls, the caste/class nexus characterized by accumulation of power, and domination and subordination, and the strategy adopted for the diffusion of the Scheduled Caste violence (i.e. retaliation of the Scheduled Castes for exploiting their women and girls by the Upper Castes) which makes the Scheduled Caste girl into a 'sacrificial victim' in Indian society. These form the major findings of this study.

Table 1
Total Population and Percentage of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe: 1991

Sl. No.	India/State or Union Territory	Total Population ('000)	Scheduled Caste		Scheduled Tribe	
			Population ('000)	Percentage of Total Population	Population ('000)	Percentage of Total Population
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	INDIA*	838,584	138,223	16.48	67,758	8.08
	STATES					
1	Andhra Pradesh	66,508	10,592	15.93	4,200	6.31
2	Arunachal Pradesh	865	4	0.47	550	63.66
3	Assam	22,414	1,659	7.40	2,874	12.82
4	Bihar	86,347	12,572	14.55	6,617	7.66
5	Goa	1,170	24	2.08	-	0.03
6	Gujarat	41,310	3,060	7.41	6,162	14.92
7	Haryana	16,464	3,251	19.75	-	-
8	Himachal Pradesh	5,171	1,310	25.34	218	4.22
9	Karnataka	44,977	7,369	16.38	1,916	4.26
10	Kerala	29,099	2,887	9.92	321	1.10
11	Madhya Pradesh	66,181	9,627	14.55	15,399	23.27
12	Maharashtra	78,937	8,758	11.09	7,318	9.27
13	Manipur	1,837	37	2.02	632	34.41
14	Meghalaya	1,775	9	0.51	1,518	85.53
15	Mizoram	690	1	0.10	654	94.75
16	Nagaland	1,210	-	-	1,061	87.70
17	Orissa	31,660	5,129	16.20	7,032	22.21
18	Punjab	20,282	5,743	28.31	-	-
19	Rajasthan	44,006	7,608	17.29	5,475	12.44
20	Sikkim	406	24	5.93	91	22.36
21	Tamil Nadu	55,859	10,712	19.18	574	1.03
22	Tripura	2,757	451	16.36	853	30.95
23	Uttar Pradesh	139,112	29,276	21.05	288	0.21
24	West Bengal	68,078	16,081	23.62	3,809	5.59
	UNION TERRITORIES					
1	Andaman & Nicobar Is.	281	-	-	27	9.54
2	Chandigarh	642	106	16.51	-	-
3	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	138	3	1.97	109	78.99
4	Daman and Diu	102	4	3.83	12	11.54
5	Delhi	9,421	1,795	19.05	-	-
6	Lakshadweep	52	-	-	48	93.15
7	Pondicherry	808	131	16.25	-	-

*Excludes figures of Jammu and Kashmir where 1991 census was not taken.

PREFACE

In the light of the values upheld by the Constitution of India (the principles of humanism, social and economic justice, dignity of the individual together with equal opportunity and equal protection of law for all its citizens) the approach of toleration of prostitution in India needs to be examined. This study, which illustrates culture and violence in the lives of prostitutes in India, perceives toleration of prostitution under culture and violence as an endorsement of violence in a society that stands for non-violence. Permitting prostitution on the one hand, and forbidding brothel-keeping on the other assumes non-involvement of the third parties. To permit prostitution in private or indoors, and yet project a clean city in public is an indication of double standard morality.

Prostitution is an element or microcosm of a wider network or organization consisting of men of power. Though they often remain invisible to the public their tentacles and strategies reach out to the most vulnerable sections in Indian society -- women, girls, the Scheduled Castes. Women can become partners in maintaining the role of caste in prostitution in India.

This study focuses on culture and violence and foresees, more than body and mind, the emotions and the spirit (love and compassion) extended to one another, as a binding force in today's divided Indian society, that strives towards humanization of every person. I begin this illustration with the hope that the humanization of prostitutes in India (who form a marginalized group) will receive top priority.

PART I

Introduction

Methodology and Background

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This is a value based study. It focuses on the role of caste, culture and violence in the life-histories of prostitutes in India. Those who categorise “prostitutes” with the broken, the wounded, the culturally “low”, the “prodigal” and the “sinners”, as being on the “other side” of the society, categorise as on “this side” of the society or “in the society” those who are culturally “high”, wealthy, healthy, free from want and suffering, leading a comfortable life. Today, in keeping with the concepts of “progress” and “development” we find super-development and under development existing side-by-side. While some enjoy abundance and freedom, others suffer extreme want and various forms of slavery such as sexual slavery. Influenced by ideologies such as “consumption” and “consumerism”, and with the availability of excessive material goods, one thing can be easily replaced by another, one person can easily be replaced by another – thus creating “waste”, “a throwing away” of unwanted things, of unwanted persons as “rejects” of the society. Based on culture, opposing groups can enter conflicts, one subjugating and oppressing the other. The culturally and economically “high” can easily make people slaves and “commodities” for their immediate need, self-gratification.

In the above situation “progress” and “development” is primarily focused on economic development and not on authentic human development. Even if advance in other material fields has been achieved, there has not been a parallel advance in spiritual fields. For, unless people are God centred and guided by a moral understanding with a motivation to seek the betterment of all, especially of those on the “other side”, people can turn against one another, one group subjugating and oppressing the other.

Christian faith holds the following views because of its fundamental and core beliefs. These include that according to the plan of (God) the Father, the church on earth is by its very nature is missionary. It has its origin in the mission of the Son (Jesus Christ) and the Holy Spirit (cf. Dogm. Const. Lumen Gentium, 1). Jesus Christ was sent into the world as the true Mediator between God and men (people). Since he is God, all the fullness of the divine nature dwells in him bodily (Col.2:9); as man he is the new Adam full of grace and truth (Jn. 1:10) who has been constituted head of the restored humanity. He said of Himself: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed me; to bring good news to the poor he sent me, to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim to the captive release, and sight to the blind" (Lk. 4:8); and on another occasion: "The Son of man has come to seek and to save what was lost" (Lk.9:10).

From the beginning of His ministry Jesus "called to himself those whom he wished to be with him (Mk.3:13). He founded the church as the sacrament of salvation, and just as he has been sent by the Father (eg. Jn.20:21) so he sent the apostles into the whole world to baptize and teach them to observe all that he has commanded them. In keeping with this mission the church is concerned for all peoples of the world, especially those considered to be on the "other side" by societies. She makes her voice heard on issues such as "authentic human development of all, every person; on human dignity and human rights based on the gospel values. To express this concern in a contemporary society is the task of mission. To investigate and evaluate how this mission is being carried out is the task of mission studies. Mission studies draws a range of disciplines to understand people and society (social anthropology, psychology, social science, sociology) and engages their teachings with perspectives drawn from Christian faith. This study that focuses on the lives of prostitutes in India (considered to be on the "other side" of the society in India) will be a contribution to Mission Studies as it engages in a survey of the lives of prostitution with concerns for prostitutes drawn from Christian faith. Jesus Himself showed merciful love and compassion

towards those in prostitution. For instance, Magdalen, considered by the society as a “sinner” gets transformed and brings the message from the Risen Christ of ‘resurrection’ and ‘ascension’ to the apostles chosen by Jesus. Although studies in various ministries (such as health, education, development, rights of workers, etc.,) have been carried out by Christians all over the world, studies related to prostitution are sparse. This study that has the scheduled castes as the primary group, will draw on the resources of studies by theologians, social anthropologists, social scientists and sociologists. It will throw light on how prostitution in India differs from other parts of the world due to cultural factors. The impact of prostitution on the lives of women and girls in India could motivate Christians, especially those in India, to take initiative towards their humanisation, especially in regard to the scheduled castes.

An attempt towards the humanization of prostitutes was made in the seventeenth century France. In a society that was marked by the effects of the hundred years war, and the thirty-years war that was devastating Europe, St John Eudes was moved by the plight of “prostitutes” to found an Order (Our Lady of Charity of the Refuge) in 1642 to care for them. St Mary Euphrasia Pelletier who was born during the aftermath of the French Revolution (1796) joined the Order (of the Refuge Sisters). Her vision of a Generalate (to share material and personnel) so that many more persons could be helped by a central government was approved by Pope Gregory XVI in 1835. As the foundress of the Good Shepherd Sisters (Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd of Angers) she opened 120 houses in her life. She also began a sisterhood “Sister Magdalen” for those women and girls (the sexually exploited or those who entered prostitution voluntarily) and wish to follow Jesus in religious life. The first batch of sisters came to India from France in 1854 and founded a convent at Bangalore. The researcher joined this Congregation of Good Shepherd Sisters in 1954.

The values we uphold are the worth of a human person. As temples in whom God dwells (1 Cor. 3:16), we consider a person is of more value than the material world. As Jesus' attitude towards persons considered to be "prodigals", "prostitutes", "sinners" was one of merciful love and compassion, the sisters of the Good Shepherd try to adopt these qualities in relationship with them. We uphold the dignity of every person and take our stance especially with the marginalized (the prostitutes), especially of the Scheduled Castes. As the Good Shepherd said, "I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn 10:114-15), we commit our lives to their humanization and we take risks. We take up their rights in keeping with the values of the Gospel. We strive towards equality among people as all are made in the image of God, the Creator. As love forms the greatest of the commandments we uphold non-violence and strive to prevent violence, especially on those who are on the "other side" of society.

During the pre-vatican period, services were extended to those in prostitution have been institutional, as the Good Shepherd Sisters were semi-cloistered – we worked inside convent walls, not outside the convent. The emphasis was on spiritual transformation of the "prostitute". After my training in professional social work, my work at the Reception cum Diagnostic Centre brought me in direct contact with women and girls in prostitution as well as clients and the third parties (such as traffickers). In particular, after a miraculous escape from an attempt on my life through strangling (by a person involved in trafficking girls) I began to question myself: are we Good Shepherd sisters, treating the symptom or the disease? What appeared to me is only the tip of an iceberg that could exist in society. Have we studied the situation of prostitutes in the context of the society in India? Towards a better understanding of prostitution in India and to extend relevant services I felt the need for a research in this field. It was in 1983, that the Good Shepherd sisters, assembled at the Provincial Chapter in India, resolved to take up a research study on prostitution. I was nominated by the Provincial in Council to take up this study (see Methodology, chapter 2).

This study on the Role of Caste; Culture and Violence in the life-histories of prostitutes is the outcome of this search – for a better understanding of prostitution and the lives of prostitutes in India in order to extend relevant services to those most affected, the marginalised.

This study examines the role of caste, culture and violence in the life-histories of prostitutes in India. The case histories presented in this study will be interpreted by me from my background as a Good Shepherd sister, with my experience of working with those involved in prostitution for two decades; utilizing the expertise gained during my training in professional social work and in counselling; supported by the knowledge and insight gained during the three studies related to prostitution (see Methodology, chapter 2) carried out between 1983-90. I hope that the findings of this study will evoke response from well wishers from all cultural, religious and age-groups so that preventive measures could be adopted and humanization of prostitutes, especially the scheduled castes, will be enhanced.

In Indian society a woman who is economically independent may still be sexually exploited, and a woman who is economically dependent may be lucky enough to have a husband who treats her well, but they have one thing in common -- a woman is supposed to be the physical property of her husband. A woman not controlled by her husband is considered as 'free for all'. A woman who remains unmarried is often referred to as 'Upputharai' or 'Upputharsu' (unfit for cultivation) which is analogous to the term waste land in South India. She is called 'adangadeva' (the uncontrolled, the sexually uncontrolled). She lives in constant threat of rape. Sexual terror is constantly used to make independence impossible.

The analogy between land and woman is strikingly expressed in speech, idiom and texts (such as Cosmology, the Sanskrit moral-legal texts -- the Dharmasastras / the Manu Smriti) indicates aspects such as the association of women with 'nature' and 'sakti' or power (see Chapter 3). Under this perception of women, subjugation of and violence

towards a wife within marriage by the husband, and of those (single women) by society receives socio-cultural approval. Girls especially (the would-be-brides) are admonished to constrain their own desires and conform to family expectations and needs.

Anthropological research in kinship and caste in India has thrown light on the infrastructure of rules and attitudes which has shaped the understanding of matters related to marriage. For instance, Harlan and Courtright (1995), in relation to the margins of Hindu marriage, confirm how textually oriented Indological scholarship has investigated the classical texts (the Dharmasastras, on moral and legal discourses) in which marriage is understood and prescribed.

In a socially stratified Indian society in which caste plays a significant role, marriage arrangements become a serious matter affecting family, lineage and kin group ranks in relation to others. Instead of aspects, such as personal rapport (that may be given precedence in some cultures), maintenance through mixture of 'pure' blood and keeping alive the welfare of the kinship takes priority.

It is generally assumed that all societies are based on a single culture or a central value system in which all members of that society participate in different degrees. Diversities within societies are interpreted as variations of the central system. This assumption, Kananaikil (1983) clarifies as having become operational in anthropological studies of tribal communities. One could talk of the 'collective conscience' of a tribe of a society.

However, Indian culture is not based on 'one-society-one-culture'. Sanger (1898) does speak of an 'overarching unity' of Indian culture, perhaps identifiable, as Bhatt (1975) points out, as a large geographical unit -- just as one speaks of an African or an European culture at international conferences. In a multicultural society (such as India), there are groups within a nation who have their own specific cultures, and place their own priorities in relation to interrelationship among people and marriage.

For instance, Indian Christians (who form one of the groups) give precedence to love in marriage. For they believe that sexuality, oriented, elevated and integrated by love, to be truly of human quality. When such love exists in marriage, it is said to become a power which enriches persons, makes them grow and constitutes the building up of a civilization of love. But when the sense and meaning of the totality of self-giving in love is lacking in marriage, a civilization of things -- in which persons are used as things or sex objects -- takes place. For this group, sexual relations devoid of true love and which use other people for selfish ends are considered to be sexual exploitation. When this takes place for a consideration (such as for cash, in kind or for other favours) the group considers this to be treating people as commodities.

However, Kapur (1978:19) points out that recently a Turkish high court verdict defined a prostitute as a woman who lives for 'profit' and sells her body at a price. The aspect of 'profit' was explained as sex, that is of 'value' when used in marriage, is used beyond marriage (beyond its real 'value') for a gain (for monetary consideration). Under this understanding, affluent women's involvement with multiple sexual partners was not considered as prostitution (as it is assumed that these relationships are not for monetary consideration).

On the contrary, in the Indian society, virginity of women and girls prior to marriage is insisted upon; chastity within married life is emphasized; a life-long sexual abstinence by a widow is expected. Sexual behaviour of women and girls, whether married or single that do not conform to the norms set for them (even in situations of rape) are considered as serious matters. (For contextualization of human sexuality, conceptualization of male and female sexuality, and norms of approved and disapproved behaviour set for the males and females, see Chapter 3). In keeping with these norms, a woman's involvement with a man other than her husband, or with multiple sexual partners is considered as prostitution and condemned.

The aspect of whether the payment is made or not (economic considerations) does not form the top priority consideration.

Radha, for instance, is a middle-aged Upper Caste woman -- bedecked in jewels and in fine clothes. She had fallen (fainted) in one of the busiest streets of Mumbai, India. A crowd soon collected around her, and eventually she was brought to me. The people left Radha at the entrance of my room. She fell flat on the floor at once and held my feet with her arms. As she cried bitterly, I gently and slowly sat on the floor and gathered her in my arms as my God of compassion had gathered me when I cried for help. She began to verbalize her experience. 'I have been faithful to my husband all these years. Just because things were not in order I was called a prostitute -- I left home and went round and round the place looking for the sea to die. I have never walked on these streets, it was hot -- I do not want to go back. Please do not send me back.'

To Radha, being considered or called a prostitute was an affront to her dignity, to her womanhood, her personhood. As she later explained, the work load at home was much more now with the marriage of her sons. Both the daughters-in-law also go to work. She has to have things ready for all at the specific times. At her age she is unable to cope with their demands. To her husband, failure in not having things ready is interpreted as lack of interest in him and her interest as being elsewhere -- on someone else. Based on this interpretation he addressed her as a prostitute. (See Chapter 6 in relation to the legend on 'sacred' prostitution where the sage orders his sons to behead their mother for thoughts that went through her mind. The youngest son beheads her). In Indian society where a man's involvement with several sexual partners whether he functions as a client or a prostitute is not considered as prostitution. But a woman or girl, whether involved in prostitution or not, being called a prostitute goes unchallenged.

Rathna, a middle-aged woman, dressed in nylon clothes and with some jewels, remained seated on the mat as we entered her brothel. Her assistant (in her early 30s) sat

beside her. She (Rathna) welcomed us, and related 'this house, both upstairs and below are mine. The five girls that are staying above are all my own. The assistant sees to all that goes on in the house, and the hired man outside sees that my girls (purchased for prostitution) do not run away. My needs are met as the girls bring in sufficient money. However, I consider all these as nothing. I have lost my dignity.' She sighs. 'I came to be a doctor. I have ended up as a prostitute!'

The above mentioned incidents of Radha and Rathna, as well as the incident cited by Kapur in relation to the term 'prostitute' in Turkey, indicate that the understanding of concepts of prostitution and prostitute vary under various cultural settings. As such, this chapter discusses the following issues prior to taking them up in Chapters 2 to 9. It presents the object of the study and concentrates on the question of defining prostitution and prostitute. It comments on the existing understanding of these concepts in theory, points to the commonalities and variations, and provides a more comprehensive definition of these concepts. It also points to some of the strengths, limitations and biases embedded in the popular notion of these terminologies in society.

In relation to caste, the chapter discusses the concept of caste in theory and provides a brief description of the various cultural groups to which the respondents of this study belong. It illustrates the day to day struggle of the Scheduled Castes, in particular of the Scheduled Caste women and girls in India who form the primary reference group of this study. It also points out that despite the high legal status of women in India, they continue to be a 'weaker section' of the Indian society. This is followed by the articulation of the rationale of this study, the analytical framework, the issues discussed, argued and recommended in Chapters 2 to 9.

1.1 OBJECT OF THIS STUDY

This study is concerned with the role of caste in prostitution: culture and violence in the life histories of prostitutes in India. It has as its primary reference the Scheduled Castes. Through an examination of the experiences of women and girls in prostitution under various phases (recruitment, initiation, brothel life and destiny) it illustrates the existence of culture and violence in their lives.

Today, no doubt, among feminist and non-feminist scholarship on prostitution, one can distinguish two distinct groups. The pro-prostitution group hails mainly from 'developed' countries and emphasizes autonomy, self-determination and prostitution as an occupational choice. The involvement in prostitution of some of these feminist writers is made clear. The anti-prostitution group that forms the majority and hail mostly from developing countries focus on tourism, legal dimension or exploitation. Judging from their writing this group seem to be non-involved in prostitution. The male writers on prostitution, whose involvement in prostitution is seldom discernable, have concentrated on topics such as the phenomenon of prostitution, disease, or the historical dimensions of prostitution. Despite their variations with regard to their background and topics of concern, the present study takes into consideration their contributions. The following discussion focuses on the question of definition of prostitution and prostitute.

1.2 PROSTITUTION AND PROSTITUTE: THE QUESTION OF DEFINITION

'Prostitution' and 'prostitute' have been defined in various ways. For instance, the etymology of the word would suggest a 'standing forth or plying for hire in open market as definition of the word prostitution' (Acton, 1857:1). Licht, Hans (1969:301.2, in Joardar 1983:9) mentions 'To entice passers-by the girls stood or sat before the lupanaria, whence

they were also called prostibula' (for prostibulum see Norieds, Marcellus, v.8; for prosada see Plautus, Paanubus, I,2.54; or prosedae, the former of these words being derived from prostore, whence, 'prostitution').

The aspect of girls standing forth or sitting, for hire in the open market place, despite the passage of time (i.e., from the time of Action 1857 to this day 1997) can be observed in society. For instance, fashionably dressed women and girls can be seen standing near public places such as banks in Bangalore, India. Semi-clad girls can be seen inside the 'cages', at the threshold of brothels, on the footpaths standing or sitting (as instructed by their 'owners', brothel keepers) in Mumbai, India. Young women dressed in saris can be seen standing out in the open field, away from the buildings (in stand-at-ease positions, with their hands on their hips) to indicate that they are for prostitution, in Uttar Pradesh, North India. The almost nude women and girls, with a bare minimum clothes on their body, can be seen standing or sitting inside big glass windows for prostitution in Amsterdam, Holland. The swaying girl on the wooden platform wore a dainty petticoat, pulled her elastic panty with her right and left hand as she swayed from right to left in Soho, United Kingdom. A tightly clad young woman who stood on the metroway in Assisi, Italy, and responded to my greeting by shaking hands, revealed the dreadful impact of venereal disease on her body. Although these few incidents cited above indicate variations in settings, mannerisms and clothing, these women were referred to by society as prostitutes, whores, harlots or sex workers.

Besides the aspect of 'standing forth', the aspect of promiscuity formed an important part in the understanding of a prostitute in the 1930s. An American sociologist Kingsly David further included the dimension of 'emotional indifference' in the definition. In 1946, the law in France defined a prostitute as a woman who habitually consents to have sexual relations with an unidentified number of men for payment. This definition was held by Kinsey, Wardell and Pomeroy, et al (1953) as a sociological and legal definition of a

prostitute. The practical interpretation meant that prostitutes accept sexual relations with almost anyone (stranger or acquaintance) who offers to pay, and the payment is in currency rather than in goods and services. While I agree that the elements of promiscuity, emotional indifference and the aspect of payment in cash which have been pointed out by numerous writers form important elements in relation to a prostitute's life (these aspects will be argued in Part 11), the dimension of choice of particular prostitutes by the clients is seldom highlighted.

For example, the report of Margot Hornblower on *The Skin Trade* (*Times*, Paris, June 21, 1993) indicates that Belgium and Germany lured 3,000 women from Latin America and Asia, as well as from Eastern Europe into the West as cabaret artists from 1985 to 1991. Sri Lanka is said to be a recent Mecca for paedophiles. In Frankfurt, in 1992, police raided a bordello and discovered more than half of the 30 seductresses to be men who had undergone transsexual surgery. There is evidence of young Indian girls taken to Middle East as 'wives' and 'domestic' servants. This indicates that the phenomenon of prostitution includes ethnic factors as well. However, in the culturally stratified Indian society, people are classified as the 'pure' and the 'impure'; or as the 'Upper Castes' and the 'Scheduled Castes'; some as the 'super-ordinates', others as the 'sub-ordinates'. Certain ethnic groups (the 'Upper Castes') have access to education and performance of rituals; administration and politics; business and commerce; while the Scheduled Castes carry out jobs that are considered 'menial'. The choice of prostitutes by clients is an area that has not received adequate attention.

This study illustrates, how in a culturally stratified Indian society, not only men, but even women remain divided under caste. Under the conceptualization of human sexuality, male sexuality has been accepted as human sexuality and is provided with dual institutions for procreation (marriage) and pleasure (prostitution). While women remain divided under the ethnic groupings as the 'Upper Castes' and the 'Scheduled Castes', and under the dual

institutions as the 'madonnas' or the 'whores', the paradigm of ethnicity or cultural interaction among these groupings within the institution of prostitution has not been explored. For instance, whom do Indian male clients choose for prostitution and why? What is the nature of interaction in the context of prostitution between these ethnic groups?

Writers on prostitution, no doubt, have studied the phenomenon of prostitution in the later part of the twentieth century and have provided valuable information. For instance, Henriques Fernando (1961:17-18) defines prostitution as consisting of sexual acts, including those which do not actually involve copulation habitually performed by individuals with other individuals of their own or the opposite sex -- for a consideration which is non-sexual. He points out that emotional involvement may or may not be present. Gagnon and Simon (1974:217) have defined prostitution conventionally (in order to distinguish it from other socio-sexual activities) as the granting of sexual access on a relatively indiscriminate basis for payment (either in money or barter depending on the complexity of the local economic system) acknowledged for specific sexual performance. Barry (1979) defines prostitution in short as 'The provision of sexual services in exchange for material gains.' Joardar's latest (1983:10) study provides the somewhat traditional definition of prostitution as 'The practice of habitual or intermittent sexual relations, more or less promiscuous, for money or for other mercenary considerations without emotional attachment.' While this definition provides a wider definition than Barry, my perception of prostitution and prostitute is as follows.

Prostitution is an institution consisting of prostitute(s) and client(s) who with or without the intervention of third parties, involve (either voluntarily or by force) in making themselves into commodities. It involves the sale or purchase of oneself or other(s), for activities that generally involve sexual relations devoid of true love, for personal 'gain', or for 'gain' of others (in the form of some kind of reward, monetary or otherwise, or some form of satisfaction) when taken-up voluntarily, or when forced into it because of personal

loss (through the experience of violence and ostracism) it extends to others such as their children. Whether considered as a personal 'gain' or for the 'gain' of others, or as a personal loss or of the loss of others, involvement of persons in this institution results in dehumanization and stigmatization.

A prostitute is a person (man, woman or an eunuch (generally castrated males)), who with or without the intervention of the third parties, is involved in prostitution voluntarily.

However, in contemporary Indian society, the concepts of prostitution and prostitute are perceived in numerous ways. The following discussion focuses on some of these perceptions.

1.3 PROSTITUTION AND PROSTITUTE IN INDIA TODAY

1.3.1 Prostitution viewed as a female phenomenon

In relation to viewing prostitution as a female phenomenon, D'Cunha (1991:12) asserts that 'Male prostitution often remains unaddressed because it is perhaps it is more limited, less varied and institutionalized compared to female prostitution'. Commenting on D'Cunha's statement -- the aspect of 'perhaps it is more limited, less varied and institutionalized in comparison to female prostitution', I wish to state that this conclusion is based more on popular opinion than drawn from a systematic comparative study of male involvement in prostitution, the typology of prostitution they are involved in, and the number of institutions under which they function. While a quantitative approach on the subject could prove valuable to ascertain the validity of D'Cunha's statement, a qualitative approach relating to culture in India, could enlighten us as to their involvement in prostitution, as to why their involvement in prostitution is not addressed, the reasons for the typologies of prostitution and varieties of institutions under which they function remaining

invisible in Indian society. The culture of a given society can legalize, tolerate or prohibit male and/or female prostitution, and likewise make their activity visible or invisible to the public. In a society that makes female prostitution, the various typologies and institutions under which it functions, visible, prostitution can appear as a female phenomenon, and emphasis is laid on female involvement. A conclusion on a social reality cannot be drawn from mere visibility of a phenomenon.

Stating that prostitution is a male and/or female phenomenon depends, for instance, on the way one perceives prostitution. An institution that incorporates men, women, boys, girls, eunuchs (including transvestites) and transsexuals, with relationships such as homosexual, lesbian, heterosexual, paedophile relationships, prostitution can be defined as a female phenomenon involving heterosexual relationships alone.

1.3.2 The association of heterosexuality with prostitution

An arbitrary and false conclusion can be arrived at by persons who observe women and girls as prostitutes and men as clients approaching them consider prostitution to involve heterosexual relations alone. During my fieldwork in India, women, girls, eunuchs (especially in female clothes) could be seen calling out their prices from the same balconies of huge buildings (brothels). Entry inside buildings such as these indicated the provision of homosexual and heterosexual relations in the same building, at times in the same room. Some of the buildings (for instance, in Mumbai, India) had children hidden away from the public view for paedophiles. During the period of my services to those involved in prostitution, besides women and girls in prostitution, several men and eunuchs approached me for medical and financial assistance. Their life histories indicated the great extent of male prostitution, the various typologies (such as 'street walkers', cabaret artists, or 'escort services', etc.). The males and eunuchs functioned under various organizations. Big

gatherings were planned by them at various centres in the country from time to time. Yet, to perceive prostitution as involving heterosexuality alone prevails in India.

1.3.3 The association of males as clients and females as prostitutes

The tendency to presume unrelated men and women seen together, especially in places where traditions are practiced to the core, as client and prostitute, is common. It is especially so in rural India where more than 80% of India's population reside. In these situations, the male is considered as the client and the female as the prostitute. In Andhra Pradesh, during my fieldwork, the existence of females functioning as clients and males as prostitutes was brought to my notice. An Upper Caste woman had given a gold ring as payment to a man for functioning as a prostitute in the neighbourhood which he had displayed to his friends. Although situations of women and adolescent girls functioning as clients can be heard in other places (such as among college girls), the tendency to assume that women alone function as prostitutes continues to prevail.

1.3.4 The idea of males (involved in prostitution) as economically independent, and females (involved in prostitution) as economically dependent

The notion of the males involved in prostitution as economically independent and as purchasers or payers of women and girls for prostitution, and the females involved in prostitution as economically dependent or as receivers of payment has projected prostitution in India as an institution of the poor. Based on this conviction prostitution is associated with poverty in India. Along with the countries in East Asia, the involvement of women and girls in prostitution in India is generalized as due to poverty and as a phenomenon of the 'developing' countries. In socially stratified Indian society where the Upper Caste women and girls are also upper class women and girls (see Chapter 3) modifies the false image often projected in India, that all women in prostitution enter prostitution because of

economic needs. Besides, as Chapter 7 indicates, the payments made by clients in most cases are received by the third parties, and some who function as prostitutes (such as devadasis) are even denied payment by the clients.

1.3.5 The association of transvestites with female prostitutes

Also, the involvement of eunuchs, referred to as 'fairies' (as genderless) or as 'amma' ('mumma' or 'mother' as they generally wear 'saris' -- women's clothes), results in prostitution being considered as a female phenomenon. Some of the eunuchs remain always in women's clothes. This causes confusion among law enforcers (the police) who often on hearing that they are eunuchs let them go free at once. However, one of the respondents stated that whenever he functioned in men's attire he had no trouble from the police, but he was stopped several times by the police when he was in female clothes. Whether in male or female clothes, he admits, he had functioned as a prostitute.

1.3.6 The law related to prostitution in India and female prostitutes

The law related to prostitution in India (Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls' Act 1956, commonly known as the SITA, 1956) was enforced throughout the country in 1958. Although some amendments have been made in this law in 1986, female prostitutes can incur arrest and punishment for activities forbidden by law. In Mumbai (in keeping with the Bombay Police Act) they can be arrested for indecent behaviour as well. However, there is no clause affecting male involvement in prostitution.

1.3.7 The association of penal measures with female prostitutes

In Mumbai, India, men, women and eunuchs are involved in prostitution. However, from 1980 to 1987 under sections 7(1) and 8(b) of SITA, 1956, 3,564 and 5,676 women and girls respectively were arrested. Under the Bombay Police Act 53,865 women and

girls were arrested between 1980 and 1987 (see Chapter 7). Besides, the procedures involved (such as the police raids, arrests, transfer to institutions, their presence at the magistrate's court, payment of fines or imprisonment) projected the image of female prostitutes as offenders against the law. They are often perceived as 'criminals' needing punishment, and this perception of prostitutes (whether their involvement in prostitution is voluntary or forced) continued to remain even after they give up their involvement in prostitution. While children's involvement is considered involuntary, eunuchs are let off as they are expected by society to earn their livelihood by any means, and males have no clause in the law and can involve with a prostitute freely. It is the women and girls who become the main targets of penal measures.

1.3.8 Dichotomization of child and adult prostitution

As the pandemic of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection and AIDS increases worldwide, society fears that the worldwide reality of sexual abuse of children will also increase. Numerous programmes have been launched at international and national levels to campaign against sex tourism, to draw attention to male and female paedophiles and take legal action. Intervention against offences committed towards children and persons are undertaken by organizations such as Interpol.

The response to the children's situation in child prostitution is motivated by genuine compassion, for children are vulnerable and powerless in comparison with adults, in the face of exploitation. They are often unable to discern between wholesome and damaging experiences and can be manipulated to conform or forced to submit to the wishes of adults.

Besides, it is generally assumed by the public, that adults in prostitution do so voluntarily. As the adults are old enough to take decisions, the involvement of all prostitutes is considered as free from violence and as an easy way of earning. They justify their involvement in prostitution as an occupational choice made by them and as their human

right. However, there are some who consider their involvement because of poverty. As the reasons for entry into prostitution will be taken up to some extent later in this chapter, and more elaborately in Chapters 5 and 6 under recruitment and initiation into prostitution, at this point it suffices to say that whether society approves or disapproves of adults' involvement in prostitution, the adult prostitutes are ostracized and stigmatized by society. Today, in the light of AIDS in India some concern is extended towards prostitutes' health care. All the same this concern is being questioned by some women workers as whether it is a genuine 'concern' to protect the welfare of women or to protect the Indian males.

While I agree that sexual abuse of children is a serious crime committed against them, and measures to prevent such incidents are vital in our contemporary society, I also observe the limited services extended to adults in prostitution. (This subject will be discussed in Chapters 5 and 8). However, observing from the point of view of the child in prostitution, services extended to the child generally ceases when she is considered no longer a 'child' and she is often left to fend for herself. For many adult prostitutes, their life in prostitution began in childhood and continues to adulthood. Health services need to be extended to all age groups with equal concern. Although the impact of the disease (AIDS) is highlighted in health education, the role of culture and economy embedded in social traditions and customs in Indian society (in relation to sexual abuse of children) does not receive adequate emphasis. This study analyzes the life histories of prostitutes in depth in this regard and exposes how institutions arise through which children and adults are sexually abused and systematically subjected to venereal diseases in Indian society (see Chapter 8).

1.3.9 Adult prostitution seen as free from violence

Sexual violence is related to power, authority and control. The focus of this study (women in the Indian society. While this study takes up the web of culture-violence-power

(see Chapter 8) within the institution of prostitution, it also discusses (in Chapter 3) the cultural understanding of violence in individuals' lives in society (especially in relation to the Scheduled Castes). In relation to the apparent indifference of some Indians towards those subjected to violence, this study discusses the theories of 'rebirth' and 'karma'. This study also illustrates violence in the lives of prostitutes and the dynamics, based on culture, as to how this (violence in the lives of prostitutes, especially on the Scheduled Castes) is perpetuated through the institution of prostitution in India.

1.3.10 The association of scheduled castes with prostitution

The association of females and the economically poor with prostitution in India has been already pointed out earlier in this chapter (1.3.1 and 1.3.4). The Scheduled Caste women and girls, who form the economically poor, are thus associated with prostitution because of their poverty. This study also illustrates the cultural dimension of perceiving prostitution in India as a Scheduled Caste phenomenon on the basis of considering the Scheduled Castes as being 'born impure'. Further, this study, which focuses on the role of caste in prostitution, through analysis of data under four phases (recruitment, initiation, brothel-life and destiny) illustrates the reality of the situation in this regard. However, prior to associating these aspects (such as 'the rationale of the study', 'the analytical framework of this study', etc.), concepts and terminologies related to caste are clarified below.

1.4 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS AND TERMINOLOGIES RELATED TO CASTE

1.4.1 The concept of cast

The word 'caste' is Portuguese and Spanish in origin. 'Casta' is properly something not mixed, from the Latin 'castus = chaste' (Littré's Dictionary). The word seems to have

been used in the sense of race by the Spaniards, and to have been applied to India by the Portuguese in the middle of the fifteenth century. In English, there is a use (cast) in the sense of race in 1555, and the Indian spelling 'caste' is scarcely found before 1600. In French, *Littre* records that the word was only introduced in *Dictionary of the Academy* in 1740. It has been used in the technical sense from 1700.

Describing the caste system, C. Parvathamma (in Kananaikil, 1983:98) states:

The caste system is a type of social stratification found almost exclusively in India. It has existed over several centuries in the country and may be taken as a fundamental unit of social organization. Caste is ascribed and one gets membership in it by birth ... The notion of ritual purity and pollution govern the behaviour of people. There are caste based occupations especially those which carry high prestige and status, others which carry low status with social stigma. Social interaction in terms of commensal and connubial relationships are often restricted to members of a particular sub-caste. So caste and sometimes sub-caste endogamy is the rule. Differential social relations mark the entire organization such as hierarchical relationship of superior and inferior (super-ordinate and sub-ordinate).

The various features of the caste system brought out by C. Parvathamma, have been highlighted by scholars who focused on various aspects of this system. For instance, Beteille, A. (1966), Anant, S.S. (1972), Sharma, K.L. (1974), Bhatt, A. (1975) and Vidhyardha, A. and Mishra, N. (1977) focused on empirical studies. Namboodiripad, E.M.S. (1977), Desai, A.R. (1978), Sarkar, N.K. (1978) and Patil, S. (1979) carried out caste studies with marxist perspective. Weber, M. (1967) and Singh, Y. (1977) dealt with social stratification in the Indian society. Singer, M. & Cohn, S. (1968), Srinivas, M.N. (1972), Hutton (1977) and Punit, A.E. (1978) concentrated on various general aspects of the caste system. Scholars, such as Omvedt, G. (1978), Patankar, B. (1978) and Ghosh, A. (1979) concentrated on atrocities committed in relation to Harijans. Ghurye's (1969:2-21) focus was on endogamy as the main feature of the caste system, and Dumont (1970:51) with his stress on the pure-impure dichotomy discussed the high ritual status of the Brahmins among rural local power holders.

1.4.2 Caste and power

In relation to caste and power, several studies tried to identify the 'dominant castes' and the bases of their dominance. Bhatt (1975) cites Cohn as having correlated high caste in rural India of the 40s and 50s mainly with economic power as land owners. Sharma (1974) pointed out in the 60s the hierarchies of caste in Rajasthan and how they coincided with those considered as the culturally 'high' and how the congruence of caste-class as having been given rise to politicization of power structure in that locality. Bhatt drew attention to the fact that labourers and the Scheduled Castes formed the lowest stratum in this power structure (pp. 191-307).

1.4.3 Caste, class and political power

In fact, it was Srinivas (1972) who first pointed out that the factors that helped a caste to become 'dominant' were numerical strength, high status, economic power and education. I agree with Srinivas that the opportunity for education and access to high paid jobs has for centuries resulted in according a certain amount of economic status and stability to the caste people. And I am also convinced that the inability to avail of education for centuries, to be involved in jobs considered 'menial' and low paying (such as scavenging, burial of dead animals, etc.) has deprived them (the Scheduled Castes) of power accrued through economic and participation in politics.

While numerous writers, such as Kananaikil (1983), Bhagwan Das and James Massey (1991), discuss at length the power struggle between the Aryans and the Dasyus (who are generally considered as those who came to India and the indigenous people respectively), Swami Dharma Theertha (1983) discusses the dominant position of the Brahmins in the caste hierarchy. He points to the struggle for supremacy between the Kshatriyas, the kings, politicians and administrators over the Brahmins who were called to carry out their consecration as kings in their royal courts. As there is no consensus to this

day among writers on the origin of caste in India, and how the dominant group was formed, etc. this chapter moves on to factors that are relevant to this study in relation to caste, with the Scheduled Caste forming the primary focus.

The study develops issues such as the congruence of high cultural-economic-political- power concentrated among the dominant castes and illustrates how this situation is at work in the day to day interaction with the Scheduled Castes, especially women and children in contemporary India. It focuses on issues such as the 'endogamy' pointed out by Ghurye (1969) and illustrates how Indian society, stratified under the caste system, further controls relationships outside their specific caste through control of marital relations. It focuses on how norms and institutions arise based on these concepts to maintain purity of blood, and divides men and men as the 'pure' and 'impure', and women as the 'madonnas' and the 'whores', children as the 'legitimate' and 'illegitimate'. Part I focuses on the situation of women and girls in contemporary Indian society based on the above stratification as a background to this study, and Part II concentrates on the role of caste in prostitution: culture and violence in the life histories of prostitutes in India. However, at this juncture, it provides a brief explanation of the three cultural backgrounds of the three respondents interviewed for the purpose of this study.

1.4.4 Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras and the Scheduled Castes

Some historians trace the origin of caste from the Vedas (the religious books of the Hindus). The Purusha Suka in the Rig Veda mentions the creation of four varnas, namely, the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Shudras. Swami Dharma Theertha (1983) and Namboodiripad (in Maliekal, 1981) provide elaborate details on this issue. All writers agree that the first three castes are created as the 'twice-born' or the 'Upper Castes'. The Shudras are created as the fourth caste or as a group designated for service. The Shudras are considered by writers such as Ajit Roy (in Maliekal, 1981;10) as the

indigenous people of India who were incorporated within the caste system after subjugation, thus forming four castes (or 'low caste'). However, the Scheduled Castes were considered as outside the caste system and were referred to under the following terms:

1.4.5 Depressed classes, Harijans, Scheduled Castes, Dalits

In regard to the search for a new name Bhagwan Das (in Kananaikal, 1983: 17-18) states:

The Simon Commission appointed by the British Government in 1927 first used the concept 'depressed classes' for the Untouchables.. Ambedkar (a jurist and writer was the only person born among Untouchables who strove for their unity) tried to rename this group of people as 'Protestant Hindu' or 'Non Conformist Hindu'... In the meantime Gandhi had introduced the concept 'Harijan' (children of God)... The then Prime Minister Mr. Ramsay Macdonald coined a concept 'Scheduled Caste'... This concept was adopted in the Government of India Order 1950.

However, James Massey (1991: 184) clarifies:

The present usage of the term dalit goes back to the nineteenth century, when a Marathi social reformer and revolutionary Mahatma Jyothirao Phule used it to describe the outcastes and untouchables as the oppressed and broken victims of our caste-ridden society. At the same time it is believed that first it was coined by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. But it was during the 1970s, that the followers of the Dalit Panthers Movement of Maharashtra gave currency to the term dalit as a constant reminder of their age-old oppression, denoting both their state of deprivation and the people who are oppressed.

Today, the term dalit is used by the Scheduled Castes frequently in referring to themselves. A Delhi based lawyer, P.D Mathew (1992:1) provides the legal understanding of the word 'Untouchability' and the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955:

The term untouchability is not defined in the constitution or in any statute. It conveys a sense of impurity and defilement. It implies certain socio-religious disabilities. It includes customs and practices sanctioned by the rigid Indian caste system whereby persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes were debarred from entering Hindu temples, public places, educational institutions, etc., In 1950, we the people of India, solemnly decided to prohibit this inhuman practice and banish it from our midst.

The above accounts under 1.4.4 and 1.4.5 provide a brief description of the two groups -- the 'Upper Castes' and the 'Scheduled Castes' respectively. While these groups formed the major proportion of the respondents of this study (see Chapter 2), there was another group that stated caste was 'not applicable' to them.

1.4.6 Caste 'not applicable'

This third group comprises mostly of Nepalese and Bangladeshis (non-Indians) as well as Christians and Muslims (Indians).

In a multicultural Indian Society, the Constitution of India guarantees certain fundamental human rights to the numerous groups with their specific cultural traditions and practices of their own.

1.4.7 Caste and the Indian Constitution

In its Preamble, the Constitution of India sets out to secure for individuals equality of status and opportunity (Arts.14-18,23,46), to abolish invidious distinctions among groups (Arts. 14-17,25-30), to protect the integrity of a variety of groups -- religious, linguistic and cultural (Arts. 25-30,347,350 A & B).

Besides, Article 17 of our Constitution abolishes untouchability and has forbidden its practice in any form. To enforce this solemn commitment the Government of India passed the Untouchability (Offences) Act in 1955. It was amended in 1976 and is now known as 'Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955'. With the above Constitutional Provision and enactments, what is the situation of the Scheduled Castes in contemporary India?

1.5 CULTURE AND VIOLENCE IN THE DAY TO DAY LIFE OF THE SCHEDULED CASTES IN THE INDIAN SOCIETY

1.5.1 The situation of scheduled caste men, women and children

In India, the Scheduled Castes, in millions, experience marginalization and exploitation, and play an insignificant role in the decision making process of the country. Despite the Constitutional Provisions (Appendix 1) and Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, the exploitation of the Scheduled Castes continues, much to their disadvantage, inhibiting their overall development. Newspaper articles, magazines and publications report the discrimination and atrocities meted out to them in their day-to-day life. For instance, 'In Marathwada in 1969, houses of Mahars and Buddhist followers of Dr. Ambedkar were burnt down and many people killed or beaten by the Caste Hindus following the decision of the Government to change the name Marathwada University to Ambedkar University.' According to figures given by the commission of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Report 77-78), 777 cases of atrocities were reported. This included 22 murders, 13 rapes, 40 burnings, 651 serious beatings and 51 cases of untouchability.

In response to the Dalit Movement, the Maharashtra Government renamed the Marathwada University as Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar University on July 27, 1978. On the same day, the Students Action Committee declared a bundh ... violence against dalits took many forms: killing of people, molestation and rape of Harijan women, burning of their houses and huts, pillaging their bustees, rendering them homeless, shunting them out of villages, polluting drinking water wells, killing their cattle, refusal to give them work. This continued for 67 days ... The riots affected some 1,200 villages ... made 5,000 people homeless and shelterless. It reduced 25,000 dalits into a totally demoralised, helpless condition; 2,000 of them had to flee from their houses or cities. (Report of the A.V. Samiti in *Economic and Political Weekly*, 1979, p.846).

While this situation is so in relation to the Scheduled Castes as a whole, the condition of women and children places them in a more disadvantaged and vulnerable position in contemporary Indian society.

1.5.2 The situation of scheduled caste women and children in India today

Despite the national and international efforts (see Appendix 1) to uphold the dignity and rights of every person, a well documented list of atrocities, irregularities and injustices committed towards Scheduled Caste women and children based on the newspaper publications in 1972, cited by Denis van de Weid and Guy Poitevin, (1981:4-5) includes the following incidents:

Murder of a Harijan mother and child (Chandrapur, Maharashtra, *Maratha* 3,4,19,72). A young Harijan girl exposed stark naked. (Punjab, *Prabuddha Bharat*, April, 1972). Violent attack on Harijan women called to work in the field. (Malikpath, Sholapur, Maharashtra, *Sakal*, 18.3.1972). Some Harijan women were beaten to death. (Hyderabad, *Nav Shaki*, 26.4.1972). Police rape Harijan women in public. (Dadariya, Trivandrum, Kerala, *Blitz*, 19.8.1972). Harijan huts set on fire, women and children died from burns (Muradabad, Uttar Pradesh, *Blitz*, 19.8.1972). Because of lack of rain a pregnant woman was sacrificed. (Dipadoha, Andhra Pradesh, *Blitz*, 19.8.1972). Some students in a Harijan hostel violated (Sangli, Maharashtra, *Sakal*, 7.4.1972). The daughter of a caste Hindu, even though her marriage has been celebrated according to traditional Hindu rites, but with an Untouchable, was arrested by the police at the demand of her father (Devakali, Nasik Maharashtra, *Maratha*, 25-9-1972). Murder of Harijan women in broad daylight (Sevegao, Thane Maharashtra, *Vishal Shapedri*, 27.7.1972) Cruel treatment of women prisoners who had organized a satyagraha (civil disobedience) against atrocities committed against some of the Untouchables (Pune, Maharashtra, *Kesari*, 27.10.1972).

The above incidents indicate that these atrocities took place in various parts of the country. As evident from Map 1 (p.28) the Scheduled Castes in India are not concentrated in one part of the country, but scattered in various parts of India. Irrespective of place, atrocities against them seems to be a common feature.

1.5.3 Passivity in the face of marginalization and exploitation

The Scheduled Caste women and children, because they have unequal access to socio-economic and political power, seem to have given up the uphill task of confronting the exploiters and appear to have adopted a way of life of silent endurance for survival.

भारत
INDIA

अनुसूचित जातियां 1991
SCHEDULED CASTES 1991

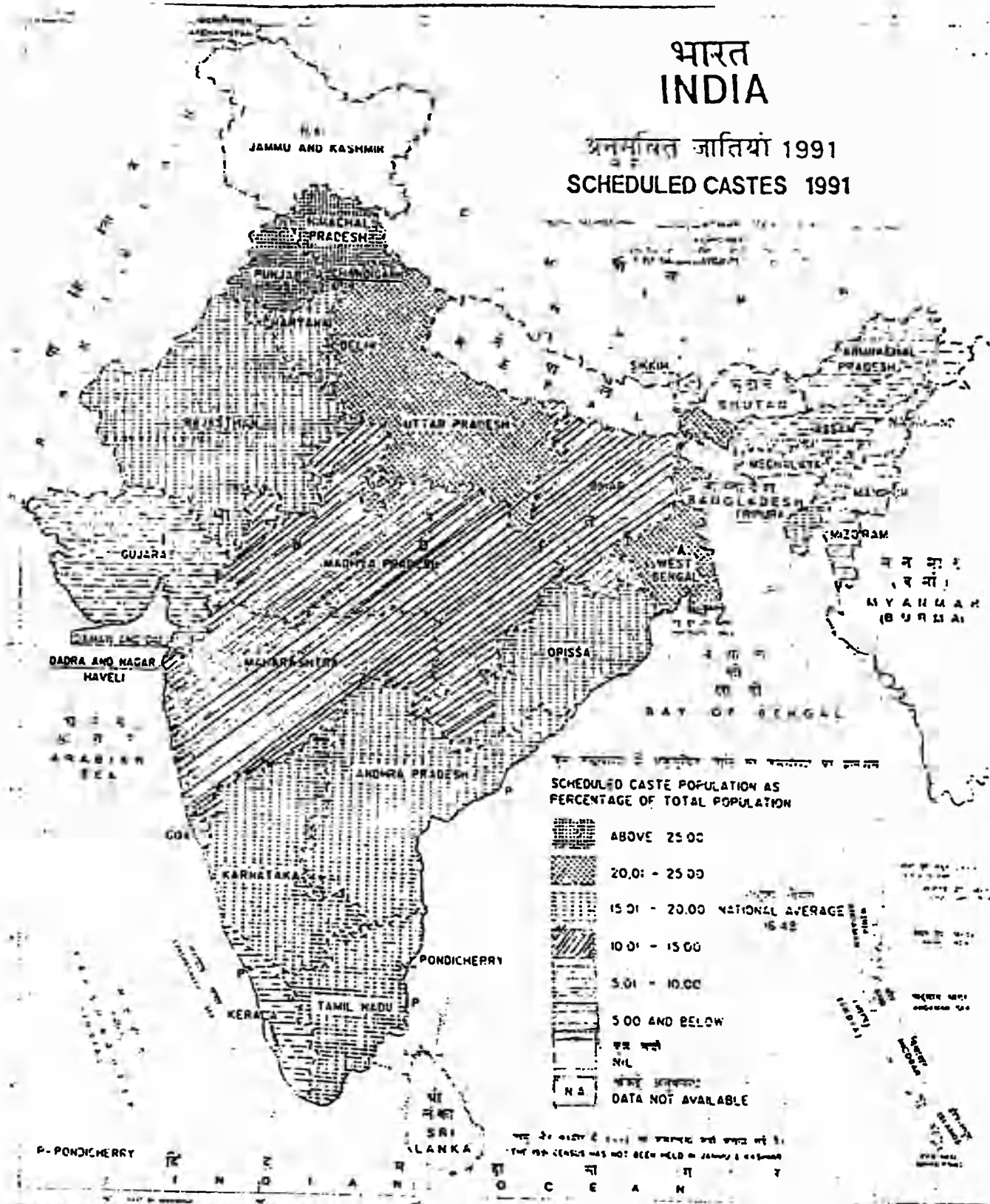


Table 2
A state-wise break-down of rape cases reported from 1986 to 1988, according to the Home Ministry

STATES/UNION TERRITORIES	RAPE			MOLESTATION		
	1986	1987	1988	1986	1987	1988
Andhra Pradesh	301	335	455	989	853	1,168
Arunachal Pradesh	9	11	16	6	9	12
Assam	354	379	278	139	101	81
Bihar	563	580	623	411	244	182
Goa	-	12	20	-	10	9
Gujarat	144	159	130	637	663	600
Harayana	144	14	90	265	41	153
Himachal Pradesh	52	34	45	117	122	134
Jammu & Kashmir	187	171	211	899	850	956
Karnataka	137	164	184	557	807	843
Kerala	133	188	197	494	488	594
Madhya Pradesh	1,526	1,695	NA	4,698	4,871	NA
Maharashtra	800	781	830	2,724	2,417	2,646
Manipur	10	9	9	27	21	24
Meghalaya	19	19	10	10	10	18
Mizoram	46	62	56	29	NA	30
Nagaland	8	11	9	Nil	Nil	Nil
Orissa	164	184	180	583	524	554
Punjab	49	47	49	37	37	21
Rajasthan	598	604	578	939	964	1,072
Sikkim	5	8	6	6	12	14
Tamil Nadu	231	231	252	750	726	669
Tripura	38	43	43	26	26	123
Uttar Pradesh	1,192	1,291	1,437	1,591	1,795	1,948
West Bengal	503	491	529	304	346	276
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	2	6	4	22	23	20
Chandigarh	4	4	4	1	5	8
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	Nil	2	3	5	4	6
Delhi	89	103	111	112	95	121
Goa, Daman & Diu	8	NA	3	8	NA	Nil
Lakshadweep	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Pondicherry	5	7	5	7	7	7
Total	7,317	7,645	6,367	16,393	16,060	12,289

- Figures are based on monthly crime statistics and are to be treated as provisional.
- NA stands for Not Available.
- Figures of Haravana for 1987 are up to February 1987 only.
- Separate figures for eve-teasing are not available. Cases of eve-teasing are included in the cases of molestation in Bihar.
- Figures of molestation and eve-teasing are excluding the months from April 1987 to June 1987 in Bihar.

Source: Bureau of Police Research Delhi. Taken from *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, Bombay, 1990.

Thus, the national and international efforts (see Appendix 1), generally become ineffective at grass roots level. After Independence, a series of legislations were introduced to safeguard the rights of women. Did this higher legal status have a significant impact on women and girls in India?

1.6 THE SITUATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN INDIA TODAY DESPITE THEIR HIGH LEGAL STATUS

Legislation, such as the Hindu Marriage Act (1955), the Hindu Succession Act (1956), the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act (1956) and the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act (1956) were enacted. In 1950 itself, the Constitution explicitly stated its goal as egalitarianism and social justice. Social, economic and political disabilities were thus abolished. Statements concerning equality and social justice made India's system of civil and political rights sound quite modern and in line with other democratic countries. Has this brought about change?

The political arena in the country continues to be dominated by men. The fact that Indira Gandhi, a woman Prime Minister, existed does not prove that women in India share power on equal terms with men. The passing of the Untouchability (Offences) Act in 1955 (amended in 1976 and now known as the "Protection of Civil Rights Act", 1955) was not able to protect the women and girls of the Scheduled Caste in the violent attacks mentioned under 1.5.1.

The tradition of giving gifts in cash and kind to the bride at the time of her marriage by her family (dowry) was a practice among the Upper Caste/Class families. However, this custom has now been assimilated by other socio-economic and cultural groups as well. The tendency to demand more and more dowry by the prospective husband or/and his family, even after marriage, creates tension between the relationship of couple as well as their

families. These situations can end up either in the husband or/and his family murdering the wife, or the wife committing suicide. These deaths, normally referred to as 'dowry deaths' in India are becoming a common feature in contemporary India. In a society where the men are considered as the head of the family and providers, women and girls are generally perceived as 'consumers' and their contribution by work are made invisible. (For the cultural perception of girls and boys see Chapters 3, 5 and 6). The following report in *India Today* (31 October, 1988) provides an insight on the girl-child's non-acceptance by Indian Society.

While the figure in the country is 938 (women to every 1000 men), for Rajasthan it is 919, and for Jaisalmer district which is predominantly populated by the Bhatias, it is much lower, 811. But among the Bhatias it is perhaps the lowest in the world at approximately 550, a figure which clearly hints of a practice that is taking an alarming toll. It is reported that no bharat (wedding) had taken place in a number of villages in Jaisalmar for decades. After a test determining the sex of a child, 7999 foetuses of girls out of 8000 were voluntarily aborted in the city of Bombay.

The above report indicates the low ratio of females in relation to males, and the adoption of measures such as abortion to avoid the birth of female children. This situation is perceived by some people as justification for prostitution, as there will be men without females needing sexual 'services'. However, these people do not emphasize the right of the girl-child to live as much as the boy-child. The expression of inequality implied in the demanding of dowry by the males and the offering of cash and in kind by the females described above, is seldom challenged. However, the satisfaction of male sexual needs is presented as justification for the existence of prostitution in India.

1.6.1 Reasons presented for legalization of prostitution in India

People who advocate prostitution as a necessary institution come mainly from a group involved in health care. They advocate legalization of prostitution with a view to having a health check on the prostitute population. However, all those with venereal

diseases and AIDS are not prostitutes. Male clients can pass on the disease to new entrants in prostitution, and if married, to their wives as well. Besides, as health education clarifies, AIDS can be acquired through various sources by people not involved in prostitution as well.

Studies on prostitution and prostitutes indicate various reasons for involvement in prostitution.

1.7 STUDIES AND THEORIES RELATED TO CAUSATIVE FACTORS FOR ENTRY INTO PROSTITUTION

Social theory and its critiques in relation to the conceptualization of prostitution and prostitutes tend to be products of historical conditions that prevail in a particular society. For instance, in the 19th and 20th centuries in the Western world, the rise of scientific intervention in social life, heterosexual conjugality, the movement towards social purity and 'medicalization' of sexuality gave rise to theories such as promiscuity. In Italy, for example, Ferriani (1881) found vice and depravity as the dominant causes of prostitution. Wood Hutchinson (1895) found love of display, luxury and idleness as the dominant cause. Merriek (quoted by Joardar, 1983) points out that one third of the prostitutes interviewed as having left their homes voluntarily for a life of pleasure.

However, in keeping with his psychological theory, Adler (1932) held that a defective or maladjusted personality or pathological conditions led a woman to be a prostitute. Glover (1958) pointed to the early history of infantile sexual impulse as contributing to entry into prostitution. He insisted that in investigating the causative factors the investigation of sexual development of the male in conjunction with the environmental factors also needed to be considered.

Malinowski (1922) correlates sexual morality with the social organization of a society. According to this theory a loosely organized society will have a loose sexual morality and absence of prostitution. In a highly organized society where sexual repression exists, pathological sexual behaviour takes place. Ellis (1936), like Malinowski, attributes causative factors for entry into prostitution to factors outside of the person (unlike Adler). Kingsley (1963), Lemert (1951) and Kelly (1979) consider 'sexual pathology' and 'promiscuity' as products of tension between sexual norms expected by the society and the sexual urge. The terms 'the sociology of deviance' and 'sociological dysfunction' were popularized at this period. In this context the prostitutes were considered as 'deviant women'. In the 1980s the notion of sexuality went beyond relationships (Foucault, 1980). According to this belief sexuality was perceived as something not constant and hence which cannot be defined. This theory believed in multiplicity of 'discourses of sex such as diverse social and historical origins, involving diverse methods, regulations and controls'. The understanding of Engels' work (1981) in relation to prostitute and prostitution was the economic relations shaping sexual norms and relationships. For instance, Kuhn (1978) and Gimenez analysed sexual morality and ideological assumptions about sexual roles in terms of the formation of subjects fit for historically specific socio-economic relations.

Today, the ethico-moral, psychological theories of the West are dominated by the economic theory. Benjamin and Masters (1966) perceive prostitution as a by-product of capitalism. In the contemporary industrial era, the institution of prostitution is referred to as 'sex industry' and the prostitutes as 'sex-workers' and the causative factors for entry are attributed to purely economic reasons. Against a background of lack of employment prostitution is projected as a 'profession'. With regard to human rights, prostitution is presented as an occupation of choice. Duchatelet (1836), Blaschko (1892), Oldbertg (1896), Papprits (1903), Helpach (1905) and Kingsley (1963) stress the economic theory for entry into prostitution. Prostitution is referred to as commercial prostitution. Outwardly

commercial prostitution is prohibited by law in many societies. However, indirectly, through tourism, entertainment centres and media, prostitution is facilitated. In this regard Truong (1983) in her thesis *Sex, Money and Morality – The Political Economy of Prostitution and Tourism in South East Asia* points to the economic base of tourism.

When the economic aspect is defined as the casual variable (as 'commercial prostitution' signifies), the cultural dimension of prostitution generally remains unchallenged. This study examines the forces that shape the sexual norms, provide the infrastructures and articulate the ideological and ethical framework that regulate the maintenance and perpetuation of prostitution in India. It makes an internal critique of major religions of India. An ideological and ethical critique could highlight some commonalities that are noble and praiseworthy: those that focus on human dignity and fundamental values such as love of God and neighbour. It can also bring to our awareness that we work for a society, not for mere absence of violence, but to go beyond, to base our society on love of God and one another irrespective of our diversities. My past experience of working with persons from various socio-cultural and religious backgrounds (including the Upper Castes and the Scheduled Castes, those within the institution of prostitution and those outside it) indicates that there are persons imbued with noble qualities of love and who give service to society with dedication and commitment.

An examination of our infrastructures, norms and traditions could bring to light whether masculine experience in relation to sexism is universalized (in defining all that is fully human). It could mean that women's experiences are either non-existent, or that shapes the infrastructure provided for development of femininity. Likewise, in relation to culture, the dominant culture in a multicultural society (India) can be stressed as 'the culture'. In the Indian situation the culture of the Scheduled Castes can be misinterpreted as counter-culture to the dominant culture and undermined. The involvement of Scheduled Caste women can be interpreted as part of their culture. Violence in their lives, as in the

lives of women from other culture groups can be considered as normal (see Chapter 3). However, hitherto no study in these areas of culture and violence in relation to prostitution has been carried out.

1.8 STUDIES RELATED TO PROSTITUTION IN INDIA

Significant among the studies taken up by scholars in India are Ghosh's (1923) on the economic life of prostitutes and brothel management. S.N. Mukherjee and J.N.Chakroborty (1933) concentrate on prostitution in Calcutta. The investigation of Correia and Germans (1939) focuses on Portuguese India. Gokhale (1955) confines his study on prostitution to Pune. Agnihotri Vidhyadhar (1955) conducted research in Kanpur -- an industrial metropolis of Uttar Pradesh, North India. It explored the immediate environment of the prostitutes, their family background and the predisposing factors within the family set-up. Punekar and Rao (1962) studied prostitutes in Bombay (Mumbai). Their investigation ended in the identification of 26 causative factors for entry into prostitution. Poverty formed only a secondary cause. Joardar's (1983:205) relates to historical perspective of prostitution in India, and refutes the theory that prostitution in India is primarily due to economic reasons. He states:

In India the studies of Punekar and Rao (1952, 1964) Mathur and Gupta (1965) Kabir (1955) and Joardar (1956) have greatly refuted the most popular theory that prostitution is due to economic reasons.

All the above studies related to prostitution in India. Those of Kapur on *Call Girls of India* (1978) and D'Cunha (1991) on legislation in regard to prostitution are valuable contributions. They have provided various perspectives with causative and remedial factors in relation to prostitution and prostitute.

However, women and girls could be trafficked and forced into prostitution through violence. This particular subject meant including the dimension of the third party involvement. Its exploration means going to risk prone areas for fieldwork involving risk to ones life. This topic had not been dealt with at national level hitherto. My 1988 study was the first in this field. Due to the shortage of time allotted for this study 1983-86, to cover the whole country was not possible. The assistance of Javed Rasool and Pradeep Kesari in some areas of North India had to be included.

1.9 THE RATIONALE OF THIS STUDY

The caste system has existed in India for centuries. Yet, its role in prostitution has not been studied by scholars. Prostitutes form a stigmatized and ostracized group in the Indian society. However, the experience of violence in their lives has not been explored hitherto. The Scheduled Castes experience marginalization and exploitation in their day to day life in the Indian community. Yet this group did not form a primary reference group in the studies made on prostitution in India.

1.9.1. 'Born prostitute', 'black', and 'primitive' theories

In the late 19th century the anthropology of prostitutes was in the realm of so called criminal anthropology and the Dutch criminal anthropologist Lombroso (1895) and Pauline Tarnowsky (Paris, 1898) were advocates of the 'Born prostitute' theory. They state that a girl is born with all rudimentary characteristics of a prostitute (such as physical foundation, marked love for pet animals etc). Lombroso's point that they were primitive (mentally defective, low intelligence, uncivilized, untrained and aggressive) was supported by Gibbens (1957) and Smart (1976).

In Indian society today, the Scheduled Caste women and girls who were deprived of education for centuries are considered as of 'low intelligence'. Having been confined for generations to jobs considered as 'menial' or 'unclean', with low pay, their way of dress, food they eat and the offerings they make to their gods within their means are all considered as primitive or uncivilized. Their mannerisms -- such as aggression towards those who inflict violence on them, etc. are considered as their 'nature' and the involvement of Scheduled Caste women and girls in prostitution as 'natural'. Glenn Jordan and Chris Weedon (1995:262-267) in relation to 'Mixed Race' women, cited the following from a nineteenth century Brazilian aphorism, quoted in Drake (1987), p. 80:

White women are for marrying
Mullato women are for fornicating
Black women are for service

In the light of the Indian situation the Scheduled Caste women are associated with the Blacks of Africa and America in regard to their colour (complexion), but also in that 'black' is 'bad' as being 'born-impure'. Although Barry (1984) points out that all thinking on prostitution does not accept violence as normal for prostitutes, in the lives of Scheduled Caste prostitutes violence is present (see Chapters 5 to 8).

1.10 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND THE UNDERLYING PHILOSOPHY OF THIS STUDY

This study presents the role of caste in prostitution, culture and violence in the life-histories of prostitutes, in the framework of the overall marginalization of women and girls in India. It situates, in particular, the experience of Scheduled Caste women and girls in prostitution in the overall context of their experience as a marginalized and exploited group of the Indian society.

Paul Wilkinson (in Sinha 1977) has rightly stated that violence is the unauthorized and illegal use of coercive power, whether by state, by factions or individuals. While I agree with Paul Wilkinson's statement it can be further stated that the essence of violence can be the infliction of a threatened use of methods of physical restraint, intimidation of persons or the destruction or seizure of property. Violence can also be stated to be excessive unrestrained or unjustifiable use of force such as injury, outrage, profanation or rape.

In regard to violence, Sarojini (in Sinha 1977) presents three theories: the functionalist theory, according to Sarojini, considers violence as existing and persisting for performing system maintenance. In a social order based on value consensus this theory advocates that inequality in a society is perceived as natural. If women are held in contempt they will be subjected to violence. The conflict theory holds that violence is the primary mechanism that holds societies together. For them social relations are unequal and exploitative. Equality is perceived as unnatural and inequality has to be maintained by the use of force and violence. Power is the central concern of the conflict perspective. Under this theory criminal statutes are created and enforced in keeping with the wishes of those with power. Violence against women such as beating and rape is an assertion of male power (domination) and control. The social structural approach (an offshoot of the theme of ancestry) is the perception of human behaviour from the angle of socio-biology. It traces violence, war and exploitation to the violent background of the primitive ancestors. This theory attributes violence to the males and victimization to the females on the basis of human nature.

Sarojini's presentation of the three theories (in Sinha 1977), in relation to the present study (the role of caste in prostitution, culture and violence in the life histories of prostitutes in India) is taken up not as separate entities but as a single correlated existential theory as follows:

The *conflict theory* comprises of the caste/class conflict between the Upper Castes/Class and the Scheduled Castes, who form the economically disadvantaged; the male domination and subordination of women, the male power over, and exploitation of, females, especially of the Scheduled Castes. The *ancestry theory* consists of the violent protests of the Scheduled Castes in retaliation for exploiting their women. This violent reaction of the Scheduled Caste men towards the Upper Castes, and the victimhood of the exploited Scheduled Caste women and girls is considered as a quality or a nature inherited by them from primitive ancestry, as a socio-biological factor. The *functionist theory* (maintenance of the existing infrastructure) is carried out through strategies such as a Scheduled Caste girl being made a sacrificial victim who becomes the target to endure violence of conflicting factions to maintain smooth functioning of the system. Through this *single correlated existential theory* ultimately the power rests with the powerful, and the most vulnerable persons (girl-children) become targets of culture and violence.

The maintenance or upholding of infrastructures that incorporate or tolerate evil or violence (often invisible) in a society can deny the majority (who form the poor and marginalized groups in India, such as the Scheduled Castes) their primary needs for survival, the opportunity for growth and to live with dignity. Attempts to alleviate their condition (by the marginalized groups) can be stifled by the upholders, who are often the powerholders, of the infrastructures, as they have the necessary machinery. The Scheduled Castes who form the primary group of this study, as my dialogue with some of the leaders indicates, focus mainly on politics; and culture and violence in the lives of their women has not been taken up adequately.

Violence against women at a global level was highlighted by the International Women's Years in 1975, 1985 and 1995. These confirmed the pitiable and degraded condition of women with which modern society is providing them. These conferences condemn the degradation and exploitation of women. Women's organizations have taken

up programmes for instance, against pornography on the grounds that it is defamatory to women, obscene, degrading and debasing, that it represents male dominance over women as normal and erotic and as educating, encouraging and inspiring men to use, despise and hurt women and girls. However, despite the provision of censorship and feminist protest, sex violence in the media has increased. (For incidents related to Rape and Molestation in India, see Table 2).

My conviction is that human beings are relational and capable of entering into partnership with God and others (as persons are of body, mind and spirit/soul). Women and girls in prostitution are also persons of unique worth, as they are not just body and mind, but in whom the spirit/atman or god dwells. As such human beings, irrespective of their background, they are of a self-projected value calling for respect, and with their own rights to be human. Humanization calls for structures that facilitate humane interrelationships, devoid of violence.

In Indian society, despite religious pluralism (each religion having its own norms and perceptions uniquely conditioned by culture and history of its own) some fundamental values emphasized 'Let not any man do unto another any act that he wisheth not done to himself' (The Hindu *Mahabharata, Shanthi Parva* CCIX21). 'No man is a true believer unless he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself.' (The Muslim *Hadith, Muslim, Imam* 71-2). 'Hurt not others with that which pains yourself' (The *Buddhist Udanavarga*, V.18). 'Do not do to others that you would not want them to do to you' (Confucius, *Analects*, Book xii 2) 'As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise' (Jesus, Luke 6:31).

Despite the above mentioned common belief (ideals) and their enshrinment in our Constitution, the structures and practice that exist in our society can validate and tolerate evil and violence. For instance, the life histories of prostitutes in this study, especially the Scheduled Castes, indicate culture and violence. Yet the institution of prostitution is

considered 'a necessary evil' (Midha, 1992). This study argues that no evil is necessary for the existence of a humane society. A society that aims at the humanization of all, especially the dehumanized and exploited needs to go beyond absence of violence to a society based on love of God and ones neighbour as oneself (as God loves us).

Besides, in relation to the dehumanized or oppressed, Paulo Freire (1972) states that for centuries they have been reduced to what he calls to a 'culture of silence'. If this research, which presents the voices of the prostitutes, especially the Scheduled Castes, has to go beyond the academic domain and is to become a tool for transformation in society and the humanization of those in prostitution, besides being a scientific study, it has to be an ethical research study as well. This would mean the researcher does not use the respondent as the subjects of the study, but forms a partnership in the joint search for knowledge with the persons who form the focus of the study. According to Ronnie J. Cain (1976) this implies that the researcher become a partner in this process of joint search for reality. David C. Lewis (1993:vii) states:

Anthropologists strive for objectivity, but can rarely, if ever, break from the fetters of subjectivity. Increasingly they are recognizing that the anthropologist's own background, theoretical data, temperament and experiences of fieldwork can channel his or her thinking along certain lines and affect the conclusions reached. However, instead of abandoning anthropology because it has a subjective component, anthropologists try to recognize the limits of these influences and distangle them. They also recognize that such an aim might never be achieved completely, but this does not deter them from seeking objectivity.

He quotes Martin Southould (1993 vii-viii):

We think of ourselves as scientists, objectively observing and analyzing data, lest we lapse from rigor and open mindedness... We study by participant observation...and our principle instrument of enquiry is ourselves, as human persons relating to others. In consequence, what we produce is bound by our personal assets, which extend far beyond what gifts we may have as scientists in the ordinary sense.

Based on the findings and my experience of going through the process of this study, I perceive the women and girls in prostitution (especially of the Scheduled Castes) as not

only victims of culture and violence, but as victors as well, in so far as their participation in this study and their transformation was concerned. In regard to the impact of this study in my life see Appendix VII.

1.11 THE ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

In keeping with the objective, this study illustrates culture and violence in the lives of prostitutes in India under Parts I, II and III as follows:

PART I

- Chapter 1 Introduction
- Chapter 2 Methodology
- Chapter 3 Caste, gender and sexuality
- Chapter 4 Prostitution in India

PART II

- Chapter 5 Recruitment
- Chapter 6 Initiation
- Chapter 7 Brothel life
- Chapter 8 Destiny

PART III

- Chapter 9 Conclusions

Chapter 2: Methodology

The choice of an appropriate methodology in this study takes into consideration various typologies of prostitution in India under three main classes: 'sacred' prostitution, 'traditional singing and dancing girls' prostitution, and 'contemporary forms' of prostitution. It discusses the limitations of various methodologies (such as conventional, participatory observation or role play; the life stories in anthropological studies: narrative interpretation methodologies and ethnography) with regard to the needs of the prostitute and situations under which interview had to be conducted. For example such as in relation to literacy level of the women, their ability to count, read or write; to the language spoken; to typologies of prostitution, whether they were in areas where prostitution receives social approval, or in places where prostitution is organized under oppressive structures; the health conditions of prostitutes, whether they were in institutional or non-institutional settings, and also with regard to the milieu where prostitutes function and in keeping with the times stipulated by the institution or indeed whether it was suitable to meet the prostitute in the milieu. This called for the use of diverse forms of methodological approach (either one or combinations of two or more). As such, this study adopts an eclectic methodological approach.

This chapter explains the process of data collection that involved aspects such as reference to libraries, talks to knowledgeable persons on the subject under study, field survey, preparation of an interview schedule, adopting the opportunistic sampling technique etc. Seeking the support of the police as a protective measure was not adopted with the view of observing the life of the prostitute in a natural setting, to maintain confidentiality and respect to persons, to ensure validity of data collected on an encounter such as this study demands. In the event of limitations such as restriction on the use of cameras or use of recordings, or unavailability of these facilities and difficulties in communication in a

country with over thousand dialects spoken by the people the involvement of interpreters was necessary.

The chapter includes details of day-to-day recording, processing of data and follow-up action further interview when possible, and of transferring data on the master sheet, coding, tabulating and analysis done manually. This was followed by interpretation and writing the thesis. It also includes the scope and limitations of this study.

Chapter 3: Caste, gender and sexuality

This chapter discusses cultural views about sexuality and the man-woman relationship mainly from the configurational or holistic approach to man's life in society -- the underlying philosophy and framework that regulates the lives of the majority of people in India who follow the Hindu faith. This holistic approach to culture thus will incorporate the beliefs, goals, and structural forces: caste and class relatedness in India, conceptualization of male/female sexuality, man-woman relationship; the dual institution of marriage, and prostitution receiving social sanction or toleration by the government.

When male destiny in life and society becomes an important feature, and institutions arise towards the fulfilment of personal and societal goals, the females become non-existent, or female sexuality gets subsumed or females are used towards the attainment of male destiny. Male sexuality is universalized as the human sexuality per se, and the infrastructure for growth of masculinity -- a framework -- becomes the structure within which femininity has to take its shape or is shaped. Although at the ideological level the equality of origin of women, and her power as nature and Sakti is acknowledged, in practice this situation gets reversed through sanctioning subjugation of women.

In relation to caste, in a multicultural society, the ideology and practice of the dominant culture is assumed as 'the culture' and other cultures, especially the culture of the Dalits, is considered as counter-culture. This chapter focuses on three pairs of dichotomous

concepts: the Upper Castes ('the pure')/the Scheduled Castes ('the impure'); the male ('the superior gender')/the female (the 'inferior gender'); male sexuality ('the human sexuality')/female sexuality (as 'good and bad') -- resulting in persons becoming 'casteized', genderized and sexualized in Indian society.

This chapter draws a parallel between the Upper Caste domination and exercise of power over the Scheduled Castes; and the lower position held by the Scheduled Castes and their experience of violence in the Indian society. As to the role of caste in prostitution, it points to the web of culture-violence-power in the day-to-day experience of women, especially the Scheduled Castes.

Chapter 4: Prostitution in India

This chapter presents a brief historical perspective of prostitution in India, indicating some of the typologies of prostitution in India and the hierarchy that existed among them. The institution of prostitution though well organized in India, was not accepted by all. Some of the law-givers and rulers, at various times in history, tried to check or even ban prostitution in their midst. Some of these forms of prostitution formed the prototype of contemporary prostitution.

During pre-Independence era (early twentieth century British India) several states adopted acts against trafficking in women and girls in India. The licensing system of brothels was withdrawn. Shortly after Independence, the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act (1956) was formulated and enforced throughout the country in 1958. Yet, prostitution in India continues. The caste system existed in India for centuries, but its role in prostitution has not been explored.

Part II

This part comprises of Chapters 5 to 8. It deals with recruitment, initiation, brothel life and destiny. It classifies prostitution under three broad heads (the 'sacred prostitution', the 'traditional singing and dancing girls' prostitution, and the 'contemporary forms of prostitution'). It discusses the cultural background of women and girls recruited for these forms of prostitution, the mode of recruitment or the strategies adopted for obtaining persons for prostitution. Through presentation of case histories, it illustrates culture and violence in recruitment and initiation process, affecting the women and girls of varied backgrounds, mostly the Scheduled Caste women and girls. The limitations in the existing law related to prostitution, the inadequate implementation of the law, the impact on the continuation of prostitution in India, are discussed.

Within the institution of prostitution, the various cultural groups (under the three main groups: the Upper Caste/Class; the Scheduled Castes and Caste 'Not Applicable' groups) who form clients, prostitutes and the third parties, and their involvement and interaction are analyzed. The web of culture-violence-power that is at work in society, is explored within the institution of prostitution in India. Part II highlights how culture masks the existence of violence in prostitution.

Chapter 8, which deals with destiny will illustrate the impact of culture and violence in the lives of prostitutes, in particular the Scheduled Castes. The destiny of women and girls under various cultural groups, and under various typologies will be illustrated. The role of Upper Caste/Class clients and the Upper Caste/Class women in perpetuating prostitution and its impact on Scheduled Caste prostitutes especially on the girls who are made the 'sacrificial victims', targets for violence in the Indian Society, is expounded.

Part III: Chapter 9: Conclusion

This chapter presents some of the major findings of this study.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

The Good Shepherd Sisters in India have been extending institutional services to women and girls in prostitution since 1854. However, I became aware of this service after joining this Congregation in mid-1954. I was engaged in assisting the women and girls in the Good Shepherd institutions in various capacities till 1969. However, the sisters (including myself) who were sent to extend services in the rescue and protective homes had to follow certain regulations, such as avoiding conversations that related to the personal life of the women and girls we served, to maintain a physical distance from them and not touch them. The policy of that period being 'do what you are told', we carried out these regulations. However, it was emphasized that our relationship with the women and girls ought to be like Jesus the Good Shepherd (i.e., one of mercy and compassion). Prayers were offered daily for the conversion of these women and girls. I joined this prayer earnestly.

It was in 1970 when I began working in Colaba, Mumbai (Bombay), India, that I began to perceive differently the situation of those in prostitution. The first brothel I entered revealed a woman (almost out of her mind) seated on a cot with a long cane, and her three small children, two girls and a boy between the ages of 2 and 6, all naked, trying to cook. The woman was desperately ill, needing care, and unable to provide food and care for her children. My two years of post-graduate studies (MSW) that followed in Mumbai (1971-73) further enabled me to be in touch with the women and girls in prostitution placed in institutional setting. At this period I heard of the 'cages' in Mumbai's red light areas, but could not visit these cages as I had no permission from my Superiors.

As a professional social worker, I began my work in 1973 in the newly created reception-cum-diagnostic centre, Bangalore. My role was to screen and assist those who sought placement in Good Shepherd residential homes (such as rescue homes, protective homes and the home for single mothers). At this centre my attention was soon drawn not only to the women and girls who were generally brought or referred to my centre but to persons who brought or accompanied them. Some of these persons who posed as 'welfare workers', 'benefactors' and 'guardians' were in fact the third parties. Males (who functioned as prostitutes) and eunuchs (including transvestites) came for financial and medical services. I began to see that what was visible to me was only the tip of an iceberg of prostitution in India. In order to acquire a better understanding of the phenomenon of prostitution in India and extend relevant services I realized a research study to be essential. This was communicated to the Good Shepherd Sisters. However, the sisters did not feel the need for it.

It was in 1974 when I was at the lowest ebb of my life, physically, mentally and spiritually, that God intervened in my life in a unique way and I experienced His mercy and compassion. In His Light the charms of this world seemed to have passed away. I experienced joy, freedom, and I could see things around me with a new freshness. I received an answer to my search regarding the goal of the Good Shepherd Sisters as to serve the marginalized groups in society, especially those in prostitution. After this experience, through God's intervention extraordinary things were happening in my life and in the life of others who were involved. This increased my faith in God's abiding presence in His creatures, in all human beings, and of His protecting arms that shield us from all harm, a confirmation that helped me to carry out this study under extremely difficult situations.

It was in 1976, before going to sleep that I read The Revelation of St. John (see the Holy Bible). I longed to see God, I implored Him to reveal Himself to me. After some time

I was awakened by the cry of the suffering women appealing for assistance. As this cry was persistent for a very long period, I contacted a retreat master who was a psychologist and shared this experience. The retreat master stated that if God wanted me to respond He would show me the way. It was in 1983, at the Good Shepherd Provincial Chapter, that it was decided that a study on prostitution in India was to be carried out, and shortly after that I was requested to take-up a research study on prostitution in India.

Although initially (1983) I was asked to do this study for Ph.D. under Bangalore University, lack of finance made the Good Shepherd authorities decide I should carry out this research in collaboration with a Women's Organization in New Delhi, which was prepared to finance the study. It was decided that the material related to the Good Shepherd Sisters (on prostitution in India) and the interest of the Women's Organization in the sale of children for prostitution, could be separated after the study was completed. However, on the completion of the four-year study (1983-86) the Women's Organization wanted to publish all the material. After consultation between the Good Shepherd authorities, the Director of Women's Organization, and myself, it was decided that I take up a research study on Prostitution that could be presented to a University for Ph.D., in keeping with the original plan. At this juncture (1987) a friend of mine put me in touch with the OCMS, Oxford, U.K., and the present study was initiated. Although my previous experience of working with women and girls in prostitution (1962-82), and the studies carried out by me at this period, will prove useful as remote preparation for this study, the following methodology relates to the present study that was begun in 1987 in Bombay (Mumbai), India.

2.1 NEED FOR AN APPROPRIATE METHODOLOGY

Any serious attempt in understanding a phenomenon or assessing a situation, event or experience, takes into account both theory and facts. Popular opinion generally conceives facts and theory as opposed to one another. However, facts and theories are in constant interaction, and when perceived in the context of the framework, rather than as an isolated aspect or event, it can indicate an implicit or explicit fact-chain or theory (see Chapter 9) that could propound fuller meaning to statements that seem simple.

For instance, in social sciences, value judgments are seen as formalized expressions of sentiments and emotions derived from culture and as impelling persons to action. Values that form major determinants of human behaviour also form major areas in social science. Since science operates as a technique of problem solving, and since problems in this sense are formulated upon the basis of value judgements, it is clear that science and values are interrelated.

Besides, in order to understand a social situation, the social sciences serve as a tool by extending their investigation to broader issues and reaching beyond these broader issues to systems, behaviour patterns and institutions. Often the external structural expressions and the subjective dimension, including ideologies, moral and ethical codes dictate to people the understanding of the world they live in, and regulate their life and destiny. In this context, an individual can often be perceived as a social product.

Under the above conditions the situation of women in India (with primary reference to the Scheduled Castes) can be due to factors such as those within the socio-ethical and moral ideological structures that form the basis of the framework, which includes infrastructures such as the socio-economic and political systems, that regulate their lives. For instance, contextualization of male sexuality as 'the human sexuality' or 'the universal sexuality', can result in giving primacy to male sexuality and secondary consideration to the

female sexuality. The primacy given to male sexuality can find structural expression in the prevalence of dual institutions (matrimony and prostitution) in society. Beliefs, such as those expressed through mythologies where the dimension of 'duty' and 'pleasure' that is depicted not in one couple, can be cited in support of men using both the institutions of matrimony and prostitution. Men's sexual excess and/or involvement in prostitution can be considered as 'natural' (see Chapter 3).

The above situation can result in giving female sexuality a secondary place in society. Women are considered as existing for the satisfaction of men: within marriage through performance of duties; and, as a prostitute, providing pleasure. It creates division among women as 'chaste' and 'benevolent' women under marriage (respectable wives) and as 'unchaste' and 'malevolent' women (pleasure objects). Honour is extended to married women, and dishonour and stigmatization to those in prostitution.

Today, women (whether in married life or outside married life) generally encounter men when deciding matters related to frequency of birth, abortions and use of contraceptives. The female body, especially the genital organ which fulfills multiple roles as the channel of birth, menstruation, for sexual relations, contraceptives and for medical investigation, often becomes vulnerable to exploitation. In the institution of prostitution where often the third parties have control over women and girls, they are subjected to abuse and violence. It is not rare among prostitutes to suffer from incidents such as abortions, profuse bleeding, lesions, mutilation and venereal diseases. Some of the male medical practitioners who are aware of the impact of prostitution on the prostitutes' bodies, take up this situation as a mere health issue. A male medical group even strives for legalization of prostitution. The police who raid the brothels have more information on the condition of prostitutes in various settings. Yet, some of them (see Chapter 7) not only are involved in prostitution, but take bribes so that prostitution may continue without interruption.

Demanding 'free services' from prostitutes when desired, under threat of arresting them for non-conformity, also exists.

Abuse in prostitution incorporates perversions and violence. Barnard, M. (1996:71) states:

To say that prostitution is about sex is to state the obvious; it is also very often about violence. Violence was such a frequent occurrence within the street prostitution scene that it was almost common place. Women expected it to happen at some point and considered themselves lucky if they had so far managed to avoid it.

Neil McKeganey and Marina Barnard cite the view held by the Glasgow street prostitutes, that the potential for violence was ever present in an encounter with the client. This possibility forced them to be one step ahead of the client at all times. (Silbert 1981; Perkins and Bennett 1985; Delacoste and Alexander 1987). The most visible among them were the street prostitutes. In the Indian context the most visible among prostitutes are the Scheduled Castes. As pointed out in the previous chapter the phenomenon of prostitution in India is considered as a Scheduled Caste phenomenon. It is generally assumed that the Upper Castes who are considered as the 'pure', the 'morally upright' and economically 'well off', are not involved in prostitution.

One of the reasons for sexual violence could be the structurally subordinate position of women in society. Sexual violence is often the result of exertion of power. It is generally the exercise of power by the 'powerful' over the so-called 'powerless' or those in subordinate position. This study draws a parallel between the Upper Caste/Class domination (concentration and exercise of power) over the Scheduled Castes, and between the lower position held by the Scheduled Caste women and their experience of violence in Indian society. It propounds this parallel by attempting to illustrate some of the factors: the strategy adopted by the Upper Castes to diffuse the Scheduled Caste violence against them, that is, the girl child being made (more than a target of violence or a scape-goat) a

sacrificial victim (i.e. ritually enacting on a victim the full violence and harm that those involved may protect themselves against to achieve the pacification of the threatening power). Towards this, an appropriate methodology is essential. The following account focuses on the examination of various methodologies that were carried out.

2.2 SCRUTINY OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

2.2.1 Conventional research methodology

Commenting on conventional methodology, Rajesh Tandon, 1981 (quoted by Fernandez and Viegas, 1985:4) points out that there are scholars who assume that social change is not the task of the researcher, except perhaps as one of the subjects of study. This perspective is contrary to the understanding of other scholars such as Powdermaker (1967:296). The possibility that the catharsis an interviewee could experience even from merely relating his or her experience to a sympathetic stranger could bring about change in a person from what he or she was prior to the interview was highlighted by Powdermaker. I have observed during my interviews with the prostitutes that some of them were able to change not only their lives, but had the power to challenge traffickers and bring about change.

2.2.2 Ethnography

However, it was Tylor, as early as 1871, who brought in the dimension of culture. This approach was further developed by Bronislaw Malinowski (1922). It highlighted the significance of ethnography (observation, of customs and traditions, behaviour patterns and folklores). Claude Lévi-Strauss (quoted in Fernandez and Viegas 1985:17) stressed that desire for information on cultures is sufficient justification for research. Yet, culture in relation to prostitution has not been taken up in India hitherto. Ethnography is of paramount

importance in relation to data collection in situations where third party involvement and oppressive brothels exist.

2.2.3 Participatory research methodology

This research process is perceived as a tool of social change by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1984). The participatory approach sees the 'actors' in the field not as 'objects' of study but as 'owners' of the knowledge they generate. Through this approach those who were deprived of a voice in the decision making process acquire a place and become sharers of power. The participatory research methodology considers that in this joint venture the researcher becomes a tool of awareness building of their potentialities.

2.2.4 The narrative study of lives research methodology

In the narrative study methodology Shulamit Reinharz (1994:37) relates that the history of women's lives is largely unknown and denying people of history produces socially constructed ignorance and is a form of oppression. Writing women's biographies, to Reinharz (with Davidman, 1992), is a form of protest. Geertz (1993) points out that the fact that biographies almost always have been written by men is well known. Even female biographers have generally written about men. The few women about whom they wrote are royal women or women celebrated in the lives of famous men. Contemporary women want to write about particular women. I want to write on women and girls in prostitution, with primary reference to the Scheduled Castes.

2.3 CHOICE OF ECLECTIC METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

An examination of the various methodologies presented above indicated that though they are significant and appropriate for certain forms of research, in regard to the present

study one methodology alone is insufficient. As such, under the prevailing conditions, one or more, or combination of several methodologies were adopted, i.e. an eclectic methodological approach has been used.

2.3.1 Formulation of an interview schedule

The interview schedule forms an important tool for data collection. Its formulation is generally based on insights received from the previous studies carried out in relation to the subject of the present study. However, a perusal of literature on prostitution in India with reference to the role of caste proved fruitless. Few studies have been carried out on prostitution (see Chapter 1) but numerous studies on caste in India, but the relationship of caste in prostitution has never been attempted for a research study. Some of the reasons could be that researchers generally came from the Upper Castes/Classes who alone had the resources to carry out a research programme. In Indian society where prostitution is associated with the economically poor, the Scheduled Castes, to take up research in prostitution would mean approaching those considered as 'unclean' or 'untouchable'. If the research findings favour the cause of the Scheduled Castes and expose their exploitation by the Upper Caste/Class, it can alienate the researcher from his or her Upper Caste/Class friends. In a society where discussing matters related to sex is a taboo, the study of prostitution is overlooked. Venturing into a study of this nature does not guarantee a proportionate sample size. There is no authentic record of the extent of prostitution in India. A study that gives importance to proportionate sample size, would discourage a scholar from attempting a study of this nature. Besides, the aspect of stigmatization attached to a study in this field, and the risk to life if they were to enter brothels, leaves a gap in the history of prostitution in India. As a result I had to prepare an interview schedule for the purpose of this study (see Appendix II).

The present interview schedule consists of two parts. Part I provides the socio-cultural and economic background of the respondent and life just before entry into prostitution. It consists of closed and open-ended questions. It provides information as to the factors that contributed towards leaving home and entry into prostitution. It is often assumed by the public, especially the human rights group, that persons taking to prostitution do so voluntarily as an occupational choice and their freedom has to be respected. This aspect will be clarified by this section of the information, as well as providing the socio-cultural and economic factors that motivated their leaving home. The relationship of respondents at the time of leaving home can be an important factor as well.

The questions in Part II focused more on sensitive issues such as those related to their entry and stay in prostitution. These questions, unlike those eliciting demographic information, are more open ended questions. Extra blank sheets were attached to the questionnaire, and the respondents were free to express their feelings. The possible answers to the questions in both Part I and II were graded and spelt out so that without delay the entry could be made against it. These divisions and sub-divisions also facilitate coding and tabulation.

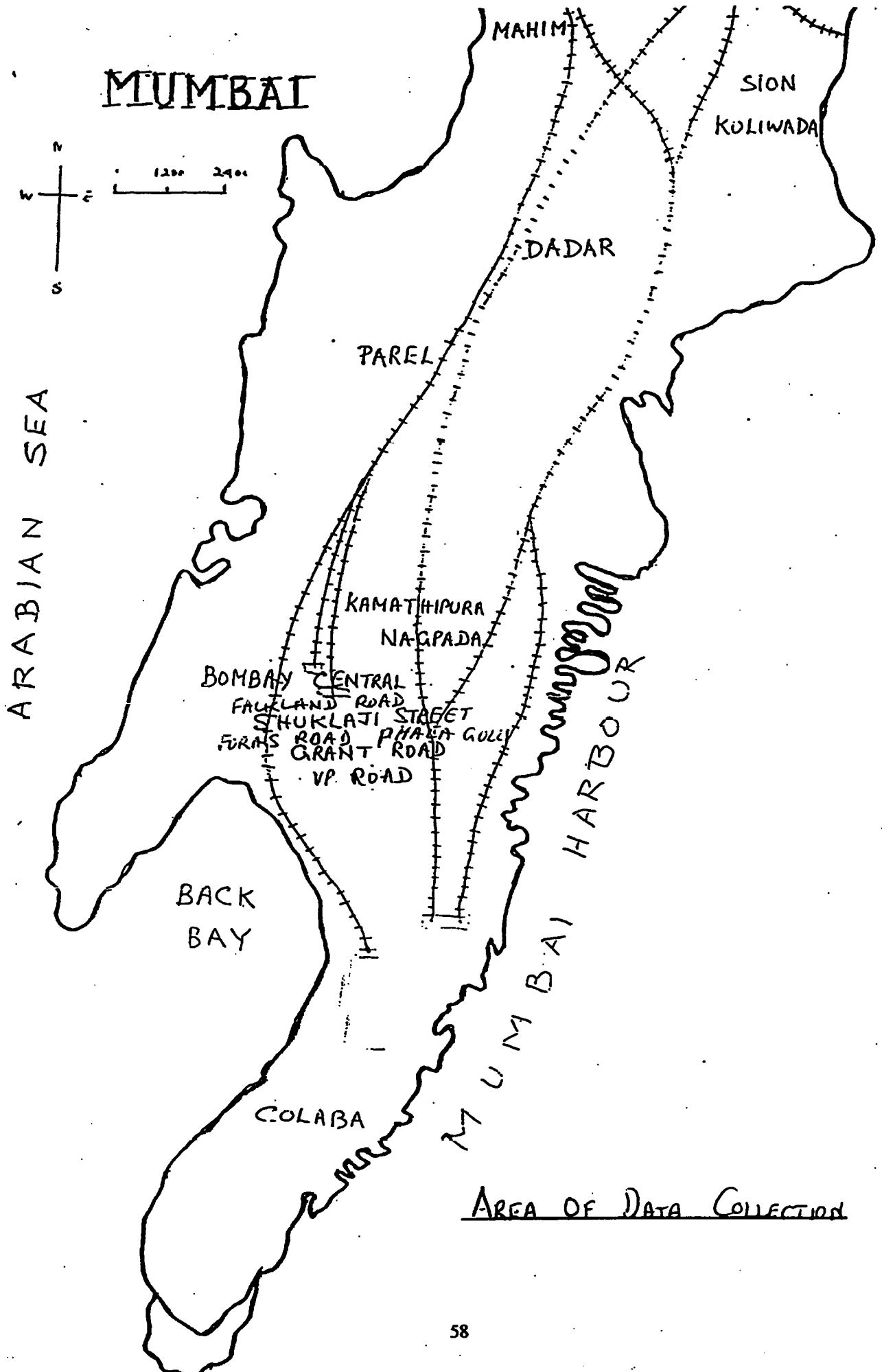
However, the interview schedule thus prepared can be administered only in keeping with the place of interview. For instance, interviewing in brothels is generally not possible. Even if the researcher manages to get inside a brothel, it is not easy to conduct an interview. As such, prior to entering a brothel the questions to be asked had to be memorized. For this study, the researcher and her assistant had to take newspapers to take down the data. Newspapers are generally carried by people in that area as most of the commodities sold in shops and markets are wrapped in newspapers. Walking around with newspapers generally does not arouse any suspicion that we are collecting data from the third parties who want prostitution to be maintained.

On return from the interview, the data thus collected on newspapers and significant observations made were compared, discussed and clarified, and transferred onto the respective interview schedules. Future plans, as to the area of our next brothel visit, preparation and meticulous planning about the role play, time of visit, would be made. Respondents who need to be followed up for further data collection, or for reasons such as urgent humanitarian needs, had to be fixed and arrangements made. For instance, the leg of one of the teenagers was cut at the ankle with a sharp knife by the brothel-keepers for attempting to run away from the brothel. She came to us, covering her head as for prayer. We had entered this brothel as a prayer group. She showed us her leg, which was blue-black. Through this group, medical treatment was extended to her.

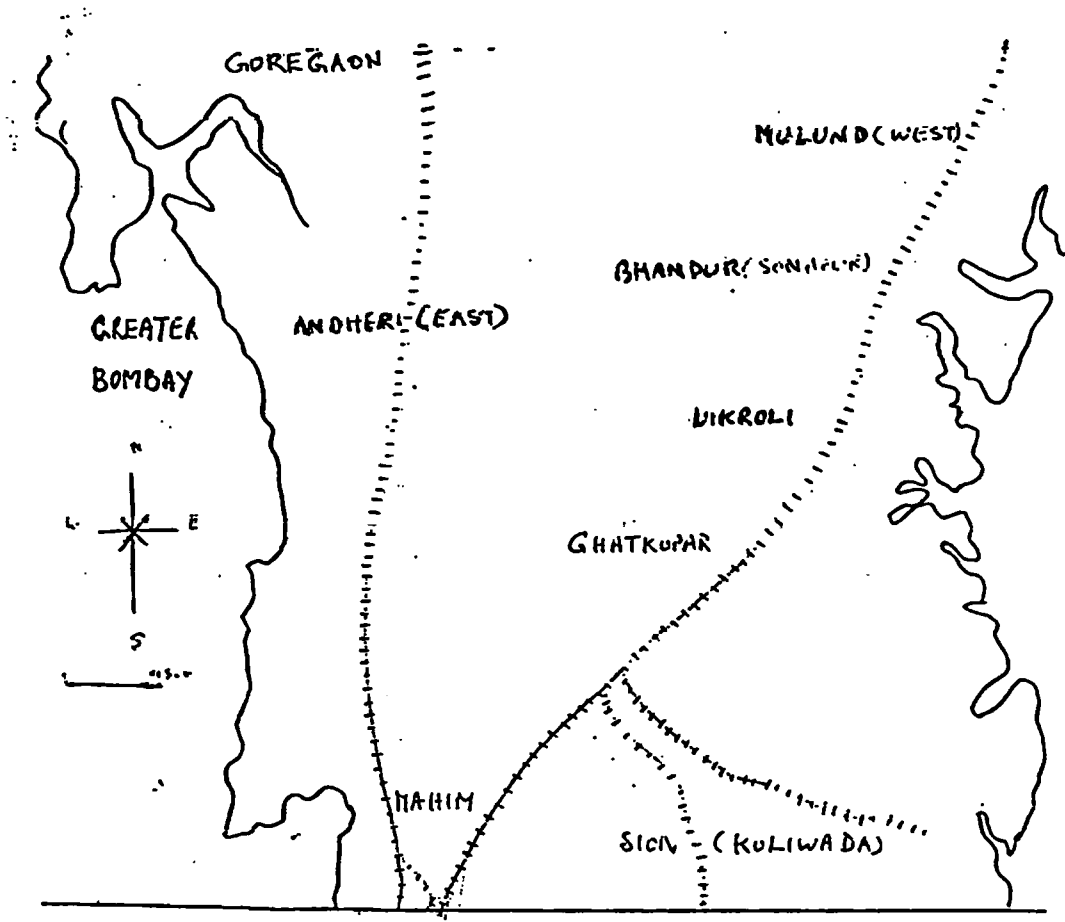
2.3.2 Place of interview

Prostitution in Mumbai is generally associated with Kamathipura. However, in the light of extension of the metropolitan city, a survey of red light areas in Mumbai was conducted. This survey indicated that the red light areas have also extended to the new areas. In consultation with Prof. P. Ramachandran (Head of the Department of Research Methodology, Tata Institute of Social Science, Trombay Mumbai, India), the target or the sample size for this study was fixed for 125 respondents. I decided to interview respondents from twelve areas (from the North, South, East, West and Central districts) i.e., wherever prostitutes are available for interview and not to confine it to one or two areas only. In keeping with this geographical distribution, data was collected from various districts of Mumbai, such as Mulund, Bandhup and Sonapur in the north; Sion Koliwada and Ghatkopar in the east; Andheri in the west; Mahim and Parel in Central Mumbai; Bombay Central (Kamathipura), Grant Road (towards the south); and Colaba in the south.

Although initially the aim was to interview prostitutes in their own milieu, entry into brothels proved extremely difficult. (see 'data collection in brothel' in this chapter). Having



GREATER MUMBAI: AREA OF DATA COLLECTION



had the experience of visiting brothels accompanied by the police in 1984, this approach seemed unsuitable for data collection. It provided neither authenticity of data nor safety to the interviewee and the interviewer. As I could not assure safety to anyone who accompanied me inside a brothel, I decided to do it alone with the assistance of God.

However, the situation with regard to the issue of language, rapport for communication, and knowledge of the layout of brothels, made me search for an assistant. In a country with over thousand dialects spoken by its people, one cannot know what language the prostitute may use. A person conversant with languages other than languages known to me (Malayam, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Hindi and English). The interview schedule has to be translated into the vernacular language to make it understandable to the respondents. Interviewing inside brothels is extremely difficult, calling for other modes of data collection without the use of an interview schedule (such as the local newspapers). In situations where the women or girls in prostitution happen to be dumb, non-verbal communication and observation (ethnography) had to be adopted. In the event of non-cooperation of some of the local persons (who had contact with prostitutes by association) I accepted the services of a middle-aged local man, whose identity is mysterious to me to this day. He had links with the underworld, knew the layout of red light areas and wished to treat his involvement in data collection as confidential. During the long delay while I tried to find an assistant to help me with data collection, I applied to the government of Maharashtra for the necessary permission to interview women and girls in Government Protective Homes. The interview schedule prepared for this study could be ministered directly to those in the Protective Homes as well as to those in other institutions (such as in Guest Houses). To collect data from the milieu, various methodological approaches were adopted as the respondents belonged to various typologies of prostitution.

2.3.3 Typologies of prostitution

The various types of prostitution in which women and girls are involved (see Chapter 4 and following) also called for an eclectic methodological approach. For instance, even though the cabaret artists gave performances on stage in Madras, interviewing them took place not in the night club but in a place far away (Bangalore), during the day when convenient to them. A girl involved in the 'dark world' prostitution (working in the darkness of the night in Tamil Nadu) was interviewed under the bright lights of red light area in Maharashtra. Basavis ('sacred' prostitutes) were interviewed on marshy land, among bushes and at the foot of the hills at dusk, as they prepared their gruel (their only meal of the day) in broken earthen pots thrown away by others. These persons are considered as 'Untouchables' and are pushed by society to the outside limits of the town. While it was somewhat easier to interview the 'sacred' prostitutes known as the 'Devadasis' who were accepted by most people in society, it was difficult to interview the Upper Caste/Class girls who functioned as call girls or escort girls in a clandestine manner. The most difficult were women and girls, especially the Scheduled Castes, in many brothels who are bought and forced into prostitution. Another factor that necessitated the adoption of an eclectic methodology is the 'working hours' of the prostitutes.

2.3.4 The 'working hours' of prostitutes

In reaching out to prostitutes for interview, the 'working hours' of prostitutes forms an important aspect of consideration. While this aspect will be dealt with in Chapter 7, at this point it is sufficient to say that the various typologies of prostitution had their own timings. There is an inclination to associate prostitution with night. However, interviews for this study were conducted at various timings. For instance, the women and girls in 'camp prostitution' could be contacted on market days in the week when they were expected to cater to clients who come to purchase commodities. A woman in prostitution

(for example, from a kalavanthurulu community) who is in the company of a wealthy client, cannot be approached when she is under the influence of alcohol. Some women who could be seen from the roads in red light areas were seated on the balconies relaxing. However, it is difficult to reach out to these few as they are well guarded by men. These women who were once in prostitution are confined in this situation by men of influence who keep them as their 'mistresses'. Interviewing women and girls on the streets, bus stands and at railway junctions meant spending a lot of time in unhealthy places and being exposed to assault or arrest by the police. (For further details on this subject see Chapter 7 on Brothel Life). Yet, each of these systems have their own schedule, and a knowledge of their 'working hours' is essential for data collection.

2.4 PREPARATION OF THE ASSISTANT FOR FIELD WORK

I accepted the middle-aged local man on the following conditions: that the payment for his service, food and transport charges would be settled each day as anything could happen to any of us, either inside a brothel or outside of it. Details regarding areas to be covered, strategies to be adopted for entry into brothels and interview, the type of attire to put on, the role we ought to play till our return were meticulously discussed and finalized. The general purpose of this study (to get to know the lives of prostitutes) was explained. A review of the interview schedule, with necessary translations were jotted down in our diary. Some of the interview techniques (such as profound respect for persons being interviewed despite the condition in which we find them, non-judgmental attitude, an openness to listen to what they say, awareness of significant sayings or incidents that relate to this study) were highlighted. In case of risk to life inside brothels I insisted that he should seek his safety and not wait for me or endanger his life to save me. On his part he shared some of the insights gained by him in relation to brothels, prostitutes and prostitution and

signed to the effect that he would be true to the interpretations of data gathered. He requested that his involvement in this study be treated as confidential. (However, with regard to the issue of 'language' spoken by the respondents, there was no need for interpretation, as I was able to follow the language spoken by the respondents while I was in the company of my assistant).

2.5 PREPARATION OF THE RESEARCHER FOR FIELD WORK

Having experienced God's love, mercy and compassion in a unique way (stated earlier) I could no longer look down on others, or dare to judge others. There was an urge in me to extend my arms to support the weak, to allow those women and girls who feel the need to rest on my shoulder in their suffering to do so. As the brothel areas are very polluted, and inside the brothels had a bad stench, in places where various forms of sexual relations such as homosexuality and heterosexuality were carried on, and in one building where men, women, eunuchs were made available, I prayed to God that I might not get sick inside brothels which would defeat the purpose of our visit. I was prepared to break the fetters that had held me in the past, by mingling with them and sharing food with them. The face of Jesus when He was pointed out 'Behold the man' (John 19:5) was disfigured for our sake, and St. Damien, who offered himself for the service of those ostracized by society for contracting leprosy, was affected with leprosy as well. These incidents gave me strength to go ahead with courage, whatever might be the outcome. The realization that men risk their lives daily for survival by working in places such as mines, and women run through fire to rescue their children, made me conclude that what I hoped to do or had begun to do was nothing extraordinary, but the role of a Good Shepherd sister.

2.6 AN EXPERIENCE OF DATA COLLECTION

In 1988, both my assistant and myself planned to visit a brothel in North Bombay. According to our plan I had to leave my residence before dawn and take buses and a train. Outside the railway station I saw my assistant waiting. Soon we took an auto (a three wheeler) and drove to the outskirts of that town. There was only one long road with fields or grass on either side. The breeze blew as the vehicle sped past in full speed. My assistant stated that we were now in an industrial area. As the peak hours of prostitution are from 4 p.m. to the early hours of morning we had selected this time. The rich men who purchase the women and girls in this brothel send cash collectors at the peak hour. At dawn these cashiers take the cash to the 'owners' of these girls. Dawn is a time when those in this brothel go to sleep. This was the only time we found feasible to enter this brothel.

All of a sudden, my assistant asked the driver to stop before a grey fort-like building with high stone walls. The assistant said 'This is the place, let us go in.' As we crossed the road to enter I invoked God's protection on us and that interviews would go smoothly without any trouble to anyone.

Although the walls were unusually high, there was no gate at the entrance (just an open space in the wall) that gave the impression that those inside could not escape but those from outside (clients) were free to come in. Once at the gate I could see a man lying on a 'charpai' (a simple cot). Brothels generally have paid watchmen or hired men. Is he the watchman? I wondered. In our planning we had forgotten this matter. However, since he was not facing the gate, we entered the dark, dungeon-like brothel, which reminded me of a cowshed. As we walked inside slowly, I kept close to my assistant. He stood near a pillar. I stood beside him. After a few minutes I could see a man seated near the wall. Whether he was asleep or watching to see what we were about to do I could not guess. We could see an adolescent girl seated near a drain and trying to have a bath with a bucket of water.

An expectant mother came out after some time and began to sweep slowly. She seemed to be either sleepy or engrossed in some thought. Shortly after this, she lifted her head and saw us standing. I greeted her 'Namasthe' with joined hands. She dragged the broom in one hand and came towards us. She said 'Despite my time nearing I have to work (sweep). Even if the baby is born will it be mine, or will they take over my child? Here the children are controlled by the brothel-keepers. The child becomes their property. Even if the baby cries we cannot attend to them, instead we are sent to clients. I am 22 now. Girls of our age can be sent to other branches (with the same 'owner').'

While the woman was speaking, two teenagers came out of another room and began combing their hair. They must have seen us talking but did not come near us. My assistant later explained that the markings we saw on the floor were the limits within which the women and girls of particular rooms could move. Evidently, the two teenagers could not cross over to our portion of the verandah. At this point a teenager came out of the same room where the woman was and walked straight to us. The woman continued speaking.

She continued 'At least if I am in the same brothel, I could see the child.' However, all of a sudden we heard a loud noise. Clappings, shouts, screaming. Women, big girls, small girls, all running helter skelter, around us, between us. They were running away from the entrance side to the interior of the brothel. I turned to the entrance at once and saw a crowd, some with lifted hands, some with sticks. A group was forcing their way in and others were trying to control them. In the semi darkness of the place nothing was clear. I thought, 'They are fast approaching towards us. Soon they will be on us. They are here with sticks raised up.' I automatically closed my eyes, offered up myself to God. I thought that any moment the stick might fall on my head.

But, a sudden change occurred. The screams stopped. The noise died down. I opened my eyes and could see a group going fast towards the entrance to leave the place. I could see the women and girls, the big girls, the small girls (mere children), getting into

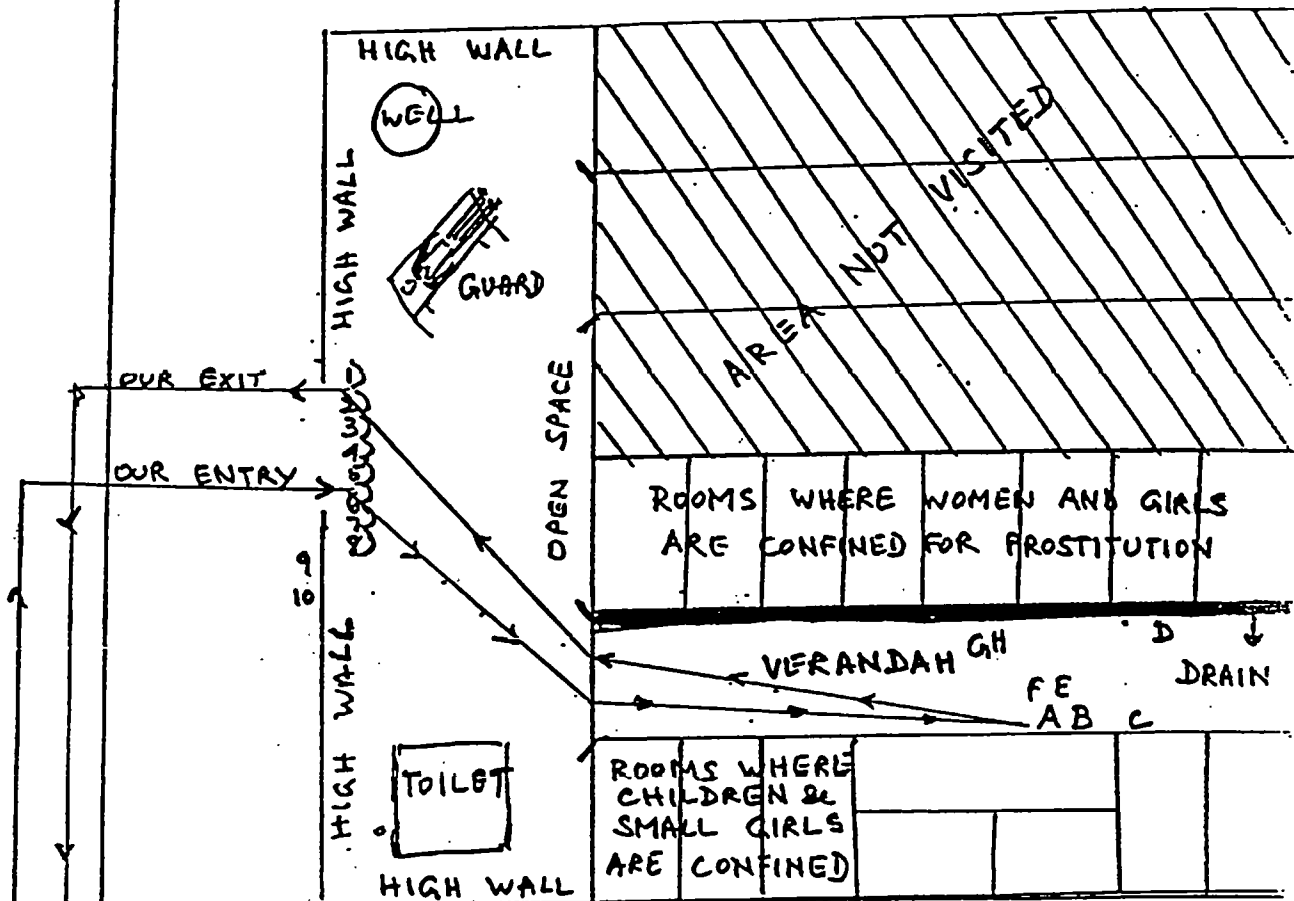
their respective rooms. Now that all had seen us in the brothel, and all were suddenly disturbed, we decided this time was not conducive to continuing data collection. So we left the building (see the rough sketch p. 67). But we were stunned to see eight strong tall eunuchs in women's clothes blocking the gate. They stood shoulder to shoulder facing out of the brothel and were arguing with someone outside. We walked towards them. When we reached close to them, I could see them stare at me. My assistant passed through the little space made by one of the eunuchs and we moved on towards the road. An autorickshaw (a three-wheeler) came onto the lonely road. It stopped right in front of us. A man got down. While he paid the fare, we got in and began our return trip. After a few seconds we turned to see the brothel. The eunuchs were still at the gate. There were two men standing behind the wall in khaki pants and white shirt. My assistant said, 'They are the police, waiting for their hafta (bribe).'

Issues such as bribe taking by the enforcers of law to permit violence against women and girls through prostitution; the organization of a brothel with 'owners', eunuchs, hired men, etc.; making involvement by children invisible and adult prostitution visible; projecting prostitution as a human rights issue despite violence in the lives of women and girls in prostitution are discussed in Part II of this study under 'analysis of data and findings'. However, at this point it is worth mentioning, that those who consider prostitution legitimate assume that there will be always women and girls available for prostitution. This study will throw light on how women and girls (who form the sample of this study) happen to be in prostitution and how this system is perpetuated. No doubt, this study will contribute towards the ongoing debate on whether prostitution should be legalized.

A BROTHEL IN MUMBAI

TIME OF VISIT: DAWN

YEAR: 1988



A PLACE WHERE THE RESEARCHER STOOD

B " " HER ASSISTANT "

C " " A MAN SAT

D " " AN ADOLESCENT GIRL HAD BATH

EF " " AN EXPECTANT MOTHER AND A
TEENAGER SPOKE

GH " " TWO TEENAGERS COMBED
THEIR HAIR

12345678 EIGHT TALL STRONG EUNUCHS
STOOD BLOCKING THE GATE

9 & 10 PLACE WHERE THE TWO POLICEMEN STOOD

2.7. DISAPPEARANCE OF THE FIELD ASSISTANT

The data collection, despite the hardships involved, continued to be progressing. One day, we were in a huge building (brothel) with hundreds of women, girls and eunuchs (in women's clothes) made to call out their 'prices' to the crowds that passed below. As the assistant wended his way through several groups of women, girls and eunuchs, chawallas (tea sellers) and clients, inside the huge building, I followed him as fast as I could. He stopped at a certain door and we went in. I was surprised to find ourselves in a huge hall before a hefty tall eunuch who was seated on the stage (on a quilt), several young men standing by the wall at equal distance in attendance (body guards?) At once I sensed the seriousness of this situation (a visit to this place was not in our day's agenda). Later, I came to know that this eunuch was the owner of that building and controller of hundreds of persons for prostitution. I realized that my assistant had put me in a terrible situation and prayed for God's protection. I greeted the eunuch with joined hands 'Namasthe'. He responded to me the same way and asked me to sit down. He ordered that tea be brought to us. As we waited for the tea, he enquired the purpose of my visit. After listening to me he stated that he had seen his daughter married, she was now well settled and happy. Having had the tea, we left the place.

The involvement of eunuchs in prostitution in India is seldom taken up for study by scholars. Their employment is seldom considered. Eunuchs can be seen taking to prostitution or organizing prostitution, and involved in beggary. As most of these eunuchs are castrated, they consider the children of prostitutes as their 'property' and bring them up as their 'own' children or as prostitutes. The woman (mentioned in a brothel visit earlier) who spoke of having no right over her child, had links with the eunuch's desire for children. Children born in brothels, those who are administered drugs, taken away by illegitimate

guardians or die -- whose concern are they? Are they being followed up by the state? Are they included in the Census?

This visit to the eunuch was made possible because of my assistant. I was neither aware of such persons, nor would have taken steps to talk to them. Although I was grateful that this took place peacefully, I found my assistant did not turn up for field work. As days passed, I wondered if anything had happened to him. Was he killed for assisting me? Or was he advised not to continue assisting me? I could not go in search of him as he wanted his involvement to be treated strictly confidentially. With his disappearance my data collection in the area began to decline.

2.8 INTERVIEWS IN INSTITUTIONAL SETTING

As the Secretariat for Women and Child Welfare was situated in Pune and not Mumbai, I had to go to Pune for the necessary permission to carry out these interviews. To get a reply for the application through the regular channels would take a very long time. Having personally obtained the permission to visit the Government Protective Homes of Mumbai and Nagpur (in Maharashtra), I began my interviews. As I had visited a few respondents in this institution for my national study (1983-1986), I was familiar with the staff of Mumbai Protective Home. One of the staff who had assisted me (as per government regulation) and had been prepared by me for interview was once again appointed to assist me for this study. As we had built up a good rapport, we could start the interview straight away. We used the interview schedule. Except for women and girls crying for their infants left behind at the time of their trafficking; sitting stunned while sharing the experience of violence inflicted on them; speechless at their condition of being covered with venereal diseases, tuberculosis etc., disfigured, full of infection, the interview went smoothly. Those who exposed their wounds etc., were given immediate treatment. A

woman who cried for her three children left behind at the time of her abduction was on the point of having a nervous breakdown. The option was given to women and girls not to be interviewed if they did not want to be. With the exception of the woman who lamented for her three children, the rest of the women and girls came in for the interviews. However, there was a Brahmin girl from Calcutta, whose family she stated as being involved in prostitution in Calcutta, who had brought her Muslim friend to Mumbai. Both were rescued by the police. These two girls were sent to court and released on bail. An interview could not be completed.

2.9 LIMITATIONS OF INTERVIEWING RESPONDENTS IN INSTITUTIONAL SETTINGS

Government regulations forbid the interviewer the use of cameras and tape recorders. The number of days the interview is permitted to take is specified. If no police raids are carried out on these days, there will be either limited or no women and girls in the protective home. A visit to the Nagpur Protective Home within the specified days indicated the presence of only two teenagers. This situation also contributed to the decrease of sample size for this study.

2.10. A NON-INDIAN OFFERING TO ACCOMPANY ME FOR DATA COLLECTION

In 1988, my book on *Trafficking in Women and Girls* was released. Most of the prominent newspapers carried the heading and gave a long report with my photograph. Shortly after this a man and a woman (non-Indians) visited the institution where I stayed. The woman (who claimed to be a developmental officer) offered to accompany me to the

red light areas. As she was motivated to assist especially children of prostitutes, and in the absence of not having an assistant, I accepted her services.

2.11 ARREST OF MY SECOND FIELD WORK ASSISTANT

While the second field assistant accompanied me on a few visits in the red light area, it was more her work she was getting done than mine. For instance she visited a clinic (veneriological), some brothel keepers etc. Her visit to the brothel keeper enabled me to understand the involvement of the third parties and converse with them. One day as we were walking on the road, a young man must have touched her deliberately. She spontaneously sprang up and with the precision of someone trained in self-defence, such as those who have done karate, pounced on him and punched him.

Another day, at the end of a day's work as we were returning, she wanted to speak to a man at a nearby shop. She stepped in and I followed her. The owner of this place (and the bar next door) was the 'owner' of women and girls in prostitution. Each batch they 'owned' consisted of about 200 women and girls for prostitution (see Chapter 7). Soon two tumblers of orange drink were placed before us. My second assistant excused herself for not taking the drink but insisted that I take mine. I thought it was not nice for both of us to refuse so I thanked the 'owner' and slowly had the drink. While I had the drink, there was conversation about some girls wanting to leave prostitution. However, as soon as I finished the drink, the conversation was abruptly stopped, both the 'owner' and the second assistant got up, stepped on to the road and hailed a taxi for me. I stated that I generally walk that distance (to the station). But they insisted that I return to my hostel in the taxi. I told them that I had a pass for the train and the bus, so not to worry. My second assistant, at this point, related that she would be joining her friend (non-Indian) for holiday and will see me after a month. We said good-bye and I walked to the station.

However, before reaching the station, my tongue and lips began to get thick, hardened and I realized that the drink I had taken was not an ordinary one. I took an express train and an auto straight to the hostel hoping I would reach the hostel before there were further complications. However, at the time of paying the autofare, I realized that I could not speak. I had lost my voice. I went to my room which was partitioned (as two persons shared the same room) and slept. It was only the next day when I woke up. No one missed me. As my going out and coming in had no fixed timings, and at times while I am at work I took my meals outside, no one expected me at meal time either. It took almost two weeks to make a few sounds, utter some sounds, letters and words, and begin to speak. The drink (drugged) has affected my throat since then.

Just after I got back my voice, I read in the newspaper (front page headlines) of two non-Indians arrested for smuggling gold. The names of my second assistant and her friend were there. My second assistant had pleaded not guilty. Their house (I had visited once to give the man a message from her) was raided by the police. A gun and live cartridges were found.

Drugs, smuggling, crime, alcoholism and prostitution are all linked in India under the broad term 'underworld' activities. Venturing into any one area in this field, sooner or later, one is faced with the other areas, although the most vulnerable and visible in this web are the prostitutes. It is seldom anyone wants to take up research in this field. In my case, a study of this nature since 1983 involved the possibility of being killed at any time. By God's grace and with the assistance of many (see my acknowledgments) and my assistants whose names are withheld for confidentiality, despite the risks I was able to collect the following sample size for the purpose of this study.

2.12 AREA OF DATA COLLECTION AND SAMPLE SIZE

From 1987-90, as I waited for information from OCMS, UK under the guidance of Professor Ramachandran (Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Trombay, Mumbai, India) the following data were collected under the title 'Caste Factor in Prostitution.'

2.12.1 Table 3 Place of data collection and sample size

Sl No.	Place of data collection	Size of sample
1	Andheri (Guest House)	1
2	Bhandup (Sonapur) Red light area	25
3	Ghatkopur Red light area	7
4	Mulund Red light area	6
5	Pahala Gulli Red light area	8
6	Pilla House/Play House/Pillar House	9
7	Parel Red light area	3
8	Government Home (Chembur)	29
9	Government Home (Nagpur)	2
10	Non-Governmental Home (Mumbai)	2
	Total	<u>92</u>

In all 60 women and girls in the areas where the prostitutes functioned, 31 in institutional settings and 1 person in a guest house were interviewed for this study.

However, for the purpose of this study, the data from the four-year (1983-1986) study on trafficking that served as remote preparation; a comparative study on urban/rural prostitution carried out for International Abolitionist Federation, Paris, and my experience

of working at various settings for almost two decades (1962-82) are taken into consideration. The following details provide the area of data collection and sample size of the four-year national study that served as remote preparation for the present study.

2.12.2 Table 4 Area of data collection

The four-year national study (1983-86)

Sl No.	State/Union territories	Location of red light area
States:		
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Hyderabad / Secunderabad Adoni, Vijayawada, Cuddapah,
2.	Bihar	Muzaffarpur
3.	Karnataka	Bangalore, Bellary, Raichur District Belgaum District, Bijapur District
4.	Maharashtra	Greater Bombay, Pune, Nasik District
5.	Orissa	Koraput, Jeypore, Nagarampur
6.	Tamil Nadu	Madras, Madurai, South Arcot District Madurai - Madras Highway
7.	Uttar Pradesh	Allahabad, Kanpur, Varanasi
8.	West Bengal	Calcutta / Howrah, Bankura, West Midnapore
Union Territories:		
1.	Delhi	G.B.Road

The sample size for the above study was 1,100 (see Rozario, 1988) for further details.

Table 5

Place of prostitution of 125 respondents from Mumbai

Sl. No.	Name of the red light area	Frequency	Percentage
1	Bombay Central:) Kamathipura) 9) Nagpada))) Simplex Buildings) 3) Gulistan Buildings))) Falkland Road) 9)) Foras Road) 8)) Phala Gulli) 19) Shuklaji Street))	48	38.4
2	Bhandup (Sonapur)	25	20.0
3	Grant Road, Pila House) (Play House),/Musthaka) Building)	10	8.0
4	Ghatkopar	7	5.6
5	Mulund (West)	6	4.8
6	Parel	3	2.4
7	Sion (Koliwada)	3	2.4
8	Andheri (East)	1	0.8
9	Colaba	1	0.8
10	Mahim	1	0.8
11	Vikhroli	1	0.8
12	N.A.	19	15.2
TOTAL		125	100.0

The grand total of sample size of this study consists of 1,100 respondents from the 1983-86 study (see Table 4) and 92 respondents from the 1986-90 study, giving a total of 1,192. Of the 1,192, the respondents with details of cultural background from Mumbai number 125.

2.13 QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF DATA COLLECTION

Illiteracy makes women and girls in India vulnerable to exploitation. For instance, they are unable to count. In an institutional setting a young girl was interviewed by me with the assistance of a friend (a staff member of the institution). She (the interviewee) declared that she was an illiterate and her age as 35. We had to ask her as to how she arrived at this age since she was unable to count. She stated that she had been asked to say so by the police. We had to ask her a question about the time of her attainment of puberty. It was the previous Shankaranthi Festival time. Thus, I, my assistant and the interviewee herself had to be involved in clarifying certain answers to the questions and come to some consensus. Among prostitutes 68.8% were illiterates, 29.6% literate, 0.8% with non-formal education (not at a regular school) and there was no information regarding literacy from 0.8%. Although the data collected from brothels might not be a proportionate sample size, the findings of these interviews are valuable (see Part II of the present study on analyses of data and findings Chapters 5 to 8).

2.14 OPPORTUNISTIC SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

In the absence of a reliable estimate of the extent of prostitution in India, this study does not provide a proportionate sample size, but adopts an opportunistic sampling

technique. However, the sample size of two studies presented under Tables 3 and 4 along with some of the case histories of persons in prostitution who had approached me for medical services, etc. (prior to taking up the two studies) provide an ample sample size (quantitatively) to illustrate culture and violence in the life-histories of prostitutes in India (qualitatively). Addition of more respondents quantitatively would only strengthen the finding of this study -- the experience of culture and violence in the life-history of prostitutes in India.

2.15 CODING, TABULATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The data collected from institutional settings were checked daily after return to my residence. Any areas needing clarification, or further information, were noted down. Data collected in the area were checked with my assistant on the same day, (with the exception of a few days when our return was too late or the monsoon rains were heavy and we had to return). In situations such as this, we began our checking early the following day. Each case-history was taken up one at a time, compared, discussed, clarified and then entered on the interview schedule. Where possible more than one interview was carried out. As the interview schedule is classified and sub-divisions of possible answers indicated, the entry of these data at a later stage on the master sheet was carried out easily (see sample of entry on the consolidated or master sheet under Appendix III). These were then tabulated and analysed with the help of punch cards manually in 1991 prior to leaving for Holland to prepare my proposal in keeping with the guidelines received from OCMS, UK.

This study (1992-97) has made use of tables, diagrams, sketches, models and maps to illustrate culture and violence in the life-histories of prostitutes in India.

2.16 CALL FOR HUMANITARIAN SERVICE AT THE TIME OF DATA COLLECTION

Call for services such as by an expectant mother in prostitution had to be given priority. Pestered by creditors to pay off her debts, and by another party to pay for her board and lodging, she had to carry on prostitution near delivery. Being pressurized further by a third party to sell her infant soon after delivery, the expectant mother was desperate. The child was offered at Rs. 3000 for illegal sale. Situations such as these needed immediate attention. A young girl mutilated by a man needed immediate medical attention. An area where a group of people lived amidst hills and were suffering from various diseases (venereal diseases and tuberculosis, etc.) needed the presence of a doctor at once. The conditions of respondents (especially the Scheduled Castes) with burn marks on their body, holes in their breast, incision made with a sharp knife on the face to make the public know that the woman is a prostitute of a particular 'owner', most of those interviewed suffering from venereal diseases, made me sad, as well as angry at the society that takes prostitution casually and even advocates its legalization. Besides, praying to God, seeking assistance from others to help them, or involving others to help some of them, I continued my research work. At this period I wrote numerous poems (see Appendix III for one of those poems). Participation at various levels (local, regional, national, and inter-national) in conferences, talks to young people, hospital administrators, etc. were carried out, papers were presented, with a view to bring about better conditions for those in prostitution.

2.17 THE HUMAN AND PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION TO DATA COLLECTION

Despite limitations and the difficulties encountered in carrying it out, this study has resulted in deepening my commitment to the women and girls, especially of the Scheduled Castes. The urgency to respond to women and girls in prostitution, especially the Scheduled Castes, makes me seek earnestly God's guidance for my future course of action. Although experiencing culture and violence in their lives, the women and girls in prostitution whom I interviewed were so gracious, generous and loving towards me. I spent many a happy moment with them during my fieldwork (see my poem, Appendix VI). When I began this study I never thought I would see this day, nor did I expect I would come to the end of writing this study. I am deeply indebted to all those who helped me to live and complete this writing including the traffickers and brothel keepers who could have killed me when I came face to face with them (see Appendix VII for the impact of this study on me). I close this study with trust in God and people that along with them we can bring about some transformation in Indian society. I have great hopes that with a humanitarian and community approach to the situation (with strategies, such as participation of women's movements, inter-religious (including the Sisters of the Good Shepherd) and inter-cultural involvement, incorporating all like-minded people (including men) in relevant programmes, we could bring in a significant change in the lives of prostitutes in India. In this follow up action the involvement of the those in prostitution and the Scheduled Castes cannot be overemphasized.

It is necessary to see this picture of human misery and exploitation against the background of the social relationships of Indian society, especially of caste, gender and sexuality. To this we turn.

CHAPTER 3

CASTE, GENDER AND SEXUALITY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The concepts of caste, gender and sexuality in India have been shaped by historical processes. This chapter discusses these concepts and indicates how people are casteized, genderized and sexualized under these concepts in India. As a result some groups are considered as high and the others low; one gender as superior and the other as inferior; the sexuality of one gender given primacy as 'the human sexuality' that needs to be satisfied, and the sexuality of the other gender as good and evil (with dual perception) as needing subjugation and control. This chapter focuses on the grid of caste-gender-sexuality that proves favourable to some groups, according them high status, power and prestige which leads to domination and subordination of other groups deprived of such advantages. It illustrates culture and violence in the lives of women, especially of the Scheduled Castes, in Indian society. A correlation is drawn between the low status accorded to women and girls in India and the experience of culture and violence in their lives. This illustration focuses on three pairs of dichotomous concepts, namely, the concept of 'purity-pollution'; the 'superior gender' and the 'inferior gender'; the male sexuality contextualized as the 'human sexuality' and the female sexuality conceptualized as 'good' and 'evil' with dual perception. This chapter will serve as a background for Part II of this study.

3.2 CASTE

Although caste has been studied from various perspectives by numerous scholars, hitherto no consensus has been arrived at in relation to the origin of caste in India. However, valuable information regarding the features of the caste system that has existed in India for centuries, and the classification of people under this system, are available. Some of the relevant material relating to this study are taken up below.

Chatopadhyaya (1964:32) states:

‘Veda’ literally means knowledge, the knowledge par excellence, the sacred or revealed Knowledge. There are four Vedas, namely, the Atharva and the Yayur, considered to be the oldest and most important scriptures of Hinduism. These Vedas seem to have been the orally composed songs and eulogies of a pre-literate pastoral people, the Aryans, and were transmitted to the later generations by a method of sheer retentive memory.

Ghurye (1969) points out that in one of the later hymns of the Rig Veda (the Purushasukta) mention has been made of the whole society as having been divided into four orders, namely the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Shudras, who seem to have sprung from the mouth, the arms, the stomach, and the feet of Brahma -- the Creator, respectively.

According to Daren Singh (1983:28):

Of these four orders, the Brahmins were considered to be the thinkers, philosophers, priests, and expected to provide intellectual sustenance and spiritual guidance to society. The Kshatriyas or the warriors were considered to be the rulers of the nation and expected to defend the nation against aggression. The Vaishyas agricultural and commercial operators. And the Shudras or labourers were expected to carry out all manual labour (in Massey, 1994:79).

A comparison of the above accounts provides not only the scriptural background but details of classification of groups under caste as well as the occupation of these groups under the respective castes. However, K.P. Sharma (1988:1, in the *Review of the Times of India*) clarifies:

According to the Manusmriti, all exterior castes, low castes, outcastes, and non-castes have to be dumped together as Shudras. The Shudras are not twice born (Upper Castes). They are not allowed what the others are. The sole duty of the Shudras is to 'serve meekly' the other castes, particularly the Brahmanas, with the expectation that if duty is faithfully performed it might enable them to go up the hierarchy in subsequent births in order to ultimately achieve Brahmanhood, the highest stage of Aryan culture.

The above account indicates the supremacy of the Brahmins as the highest stage of Aryan culture, and also points to the caste in relation to the theories of Karma and rebirth. Namely, that if the duty of their respective caste is performed faithfully in this life it will enable a person to go up the hierarchy of caste in future generations. In keeping with these theories of Karma and rebirth, the birth of a person in a particular caste in the present life is considered as a reward for the faithful carrying out of one's own dharma or duty in the previous life (past) or a punishment for non-performance of one's dharma or duty faithfully in the past. For a Shudra it meant carrying out his duty (serving the Upper Castes) faithfully and being born a Vaishya, then a Kshatriya and finally as a Brahmin, (a stage that is considered as leading to Moksha or Liberation). The person is perceived as responsible for having been born in a particular caste. Ghurye (1969:50) relates that at the end of the Vedic Period itself the Varna System (varna means colour) began to modify itself into the Caste System. Ramiah (in Massey, 1994:79) adds:

Caste is a system in itself. It divides the entire Hindu population into various endogamous groups with varying social status. Individuals who are born in one group can never become members of any other group. They assume the social status or social identity of the group in which they are born and thereafter they hardly have scope to alter their given identity.

While the above four major caste divisions along with the numerous sub-castes, and sub-sub-castes are accepted by most scholars in relation to caste in India, mention is made of the existence of groups of people (who are considered as outside of the pale of the caste system) and as the 'Untouchables'. Joanna Liddle and Rama Joshi (1986:58) throw some more insight onto the existence of these groups:

Caste divides the population into four major groups: the brahmin (priestly caste) at the top, followed by kshatriyas (warrior caste), then the vaishya (commoners, usually; known as the trading and artisan castes), and at the bottom the Sudra (agricultural labourers) some of whom are beyond the pale of caste and are known as untouchables. The Sudra is not allowed to take the caste initiation ceremony, at which male members of the other three castes receive the sacred thread and are 'reborn' into the caste (and therefore known as 'twice born' castes). Within the four major groups there are thousands of sub-castes which vary regionally.

Joanna Liddle and Rama Joshi provide valuable information about not only the major four castes, about undergoing the Upanayana ceremony and about being called as the 'twice born', but also indicate the 'Untouchables' as some groups among the Shudras. But today, scholars like Bhagwan Das (ed. Kananaikil, 1983) state the name 'Scheduled Castes' as having been suggested as an alternative term for the 'untouchables' or 'depressed classes' by the Simon Commission in 1931 at the time of drawing up a schedule of untouchable groups. This term 'Scheduled Caste' is in use as per the Constitution of India (see Article 341, order 1950, Gazette of India 1950, Pt. 2.3.1931). The term 'Harijan' was introduced by Mahatma Gandhi. However, the people in these groups prefer to be called by 'dalits' -- a term coined by Mahatma Jyothiba Phule (1827-1890). This indicates Shudras and the Scheduled Castes as different groups.

Commenting on the caste system Ambedkar (1992), a jurist, reformer and leader among, and of, the Scheduled Castes, states:

All scriptures that emerge after the Vedas in one way or other advocated the caste system. It is argued that Manu, the author of the *Manusmriti*, should not be held responsible for the creation of the caste system but for the preaching of the sanctity of the Varna System which is considered as the parent of caste. In that sense it is said, Manu can be charged with being the progenitor if not the author of the caste system.

Today, the unique cultural phenomenon that classifies people under caste is perceived as a religio-cultural phenomenon and has a direct impact on the Hindus. A. Ramaiah and Gopalan (in Amalorpavadass, 1981) clarify how the Purusharthas (things which are desired by man such as wealth and pleasure) and their satisfaction for a rounded

personality are considered essential, and the Varnashrama scheme (based on placing one's skills at the disposal of society) formed important tenets of Hinduism. Thus we find sexuality and its gratification is legitimized and incorporated in the holistic approach to man's life in a society (unless the person in quest of spiritual perfection renounces it) towards attainment of his and society's destiny or goal (i.e. Moksha or Liberation).

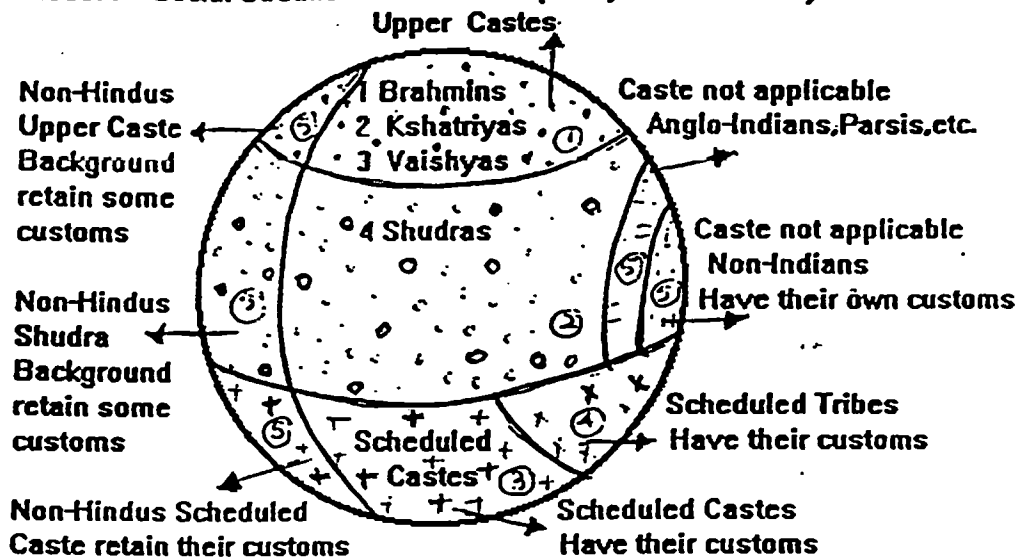
3.3 ONE SOCIETY, ONE CULTURE

The above caste system and its classifications gives the impression that India consists of one society, one culture. The concept of one society, one culture assumes Indian society as possessing a central value system in which all members participate in different degrees. Kananaikil (ed. 1983) points out that diversities within societies according to the above view are interpreted as variations of the central system. This assumption according to Kananaikil, has become operational in anthropological studies of tribal communities. One could, for example, talk of the 'collective conscience' of a tribe or a society.

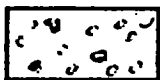
3.4 COMPLEX SOCIETIES

However, today (just as most modern societies tend to be complex societies composed of diverse ethnic, cultural and ideological groups and are held by a delicate central authority), India is a complex society with multicultural diversity. Its cultural unity could be as unreal as its assumed political unity. The following Model I presents the social stratification of contemporary Indian society.

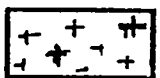
Model I Social Stratification of Contemporary Indian Society



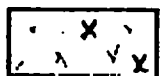
Group 1: According to P.M. Suresh Kumar, 15% of the population of India are the 'twice-born' or the 'Upper Castes'.



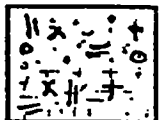
Group 2: The 'Shudras' form 42.64%. They are within the Caste System. They are referred to as the 'Low Castes'.



Group 3: The 'Scheduled Castes' who form 16.48% according to the Census Report, India 1991, were considered as 'Untouchables' in the Indian society. They form a marginalized group in the Indian society.



Group 4: The 'Scheduled Tribes' form 8.08% according to the Census Report, India 1991.



Group 5: The Non-Hindus (Indians as well as Non-Indians who belong to other religions, and to who declare 'caste as not applicable' form 17.8% of India's population (based on their religious classification in India).

Model I indicates 15% of India's population as the Upper Castes; 16.48% as the Scheduled Castes; 8.08% belonging to the Scheduled Tribes group; 17.80% as professing religions other than Hinduism (as such caste is not applicable to them although they retain some of the customs and traditions of their earlier caste background); and the rest (42.64%) forming the Shudras. Having presented the social stratification of contemporary Indian society, this chapter focuses on caste, gender and sexuality, and illustrates how the grid of caste-gender-sexuality places women and girls in Indian society in a disadvantaged position, creating violence in their lives. It takes up the dichotomy 'the concept of purity-pollution'.

3.5 CONCEPT OF PURITY-POLLUTION

Under the hierarchy of caste (the vertical dimension) the Upper Castes (the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas) are considered as the ritually pure. Among them the Brahmins are perceived as the purest and placed at the topmost of the vertical order or hierarchy of purity-pollution. The Shudras, who are included in the caste system and form the fourth caste are considered as impure and of the lower order. The Scheduled Castes are counted as outside the pale of the caste system and are seen as the ritually impure. The Scheduled Castes are perceived as the most impure or polluted -- as holding the lowest position in the vertical dimension of 'purity-pollution' order but included in the Hindu fold. A small minority of groups are referred to as the Scheduled Tribes (8.80%, see Model I) and the rest as outside the caste system.

In regard to social relationships (horizontal dimension) a distance is maintained between the Upper Castes and the others, i.e., not only with those outside the caste system but with Shudras, and especially with the Scheduled Castes who are referred to as the 'untouchables'.

3.6 WOMEN AND CASTE AND GENDER

The women of the Upper Castes, though born in Upper Caste families and caste-wise holding higher social status, due to their recurring 'impure state' based on the biological process (such as child birth, menstruation) are associated with Shudras or as women's caste (or in Hindi as 'aaurat jati'). The Scheduled Caste women, however, are perceived as the ritually impure and form the most segregated category (in the horizontal dimension). While men are classified meticulously women are treated as a uniform category. This is evident in Manu's *Dharmashastra*, for instance, where the blanket term 'women' is used for all women irrespective of their social origin and status. The punishment for killing a woman or a Shudra was the same. Women were considered as men's property. Due to women's biological processes attitudes such as contempt and fear also existed among men. Further, on the basis of gender and caste they were dichotomized as the 'insiders' and the 'outsiders'.

3.7 GENDER

With regard to gender, in Hinduism creation starts with Godhead which is conceived as a unity containing male and female principles. 'The Lord (Prabhu) dividing his own spirit (atman) and body (deha), became half male and half female' (Manu 1,32). In Brahma Vaivarta, Krishna Janma Khanda (43,56-67) it is given:

Some hold there is one Brahma, the emblem of eternal light. Others hold Brahma is of two kinds, Prakriti and Purusha. Those who hold that Brahma is one maintain that Brahma is the cause of all and transcends both Prakriti and Purusha both of whom emanate from Him; or they maintain that the same Brahma willfully divided Himself into two parts ... Purusha is eternal; and so is Goddess Prakriti. ... They are parents of the world.

Thus woman along with man, is seen above as direct emanation from the divine body and she is part of his divine self. Just as man, the woman shares the original divine power. Rani points out that both men and women could hold property. Vedic hymns indicate that both husband and wife could hold joint property. Both boys and girls went through the 'Upanayana' ceremony (initiation into student life). Women like men were educated to teach. Women performed sacrifices to gods (in Devasahayam, 1992:195). The Gandharva form of marriage and swayamvara (marriage based on love, and freedom to select her marital partner) existed.

3.7.1 Inversion of value and power in relation to women

R.P. Sharma (1988:1) admits that in the Vedic society women were involved in a number of activities and a degree of freedom was allowed. However, he points out that the women at this period had to go through ideological constraints. Even the Vedic society, he indicates, was a male dominated society where women had to abide by the laws made by the males. The emphasis was not on daughters but on sons. He points to an entire chapter in Brithadaranyaka Upanishada which is devoted to the ceremonial for the birth of a son. A Vedic passage urges the bride: 'Go to thy husband's house and be the mistress of the house. Be the mistress of all and exercise thine authority over all in that house.' But the following verse in the Rig Veda makes it quite clear that the real authority lies with the husband who proclaims: 'I take thine hand for good fortune ... the gods have given thee to me, that I may be the master of a household...'

Thus we find that although the equal origin of man and woman in the divinity is believed, in reality a lower status is attributed to women. For instance, refusal of 'Upanayana' ceremony to the girls (initiation into student life) deprived them of the opportunity of education; illiteracy deprived them of the learning of sacred texts and participation in the rituals; it confined them to the domestic sphere of work (such as child

bearing, child rearing and domestic work) and appointed the Upper Caste women to be 'insiders' and the Scheduled Caste women as 'outsiders' (see under caste and economy).

In relation to the status of women, no doubt, changes have taken place during the course of history, such as during the period of *Manusmritis* (The Ordinances of Manu) around A.D. 700. The female bodily processes (menstruation, pregnancies, childbirth and lactation) fell more in the hands of lawmakers, and the Smritis (religious texts and rules) which reflect concern for purity-pollution. Women were segregated under purity-pollution. This perception brought about attitudinal changes. The denial of Upanayana ceremony to girls led to illiteracy and non-participation in rituals. Thus the sacredness of woman's body was reduced to an impure state and the sacred rituals went to men, considered pure. Folklores and myths speak of women's bodies. These suggestions, writings and compositions about women are generally written by men.

However, from the women's point of view, the female body is seen as having the capacity that no male has, for when people bleed they generally die. But women continue to live despite the loss of blood. And when she does not bleed for 10 lunar months she produces a new human life, it ends up in a creation of a child. Women consider these procreative powers as sacred. Mother goddess figures are found in different cultures throughout the world, so also in India. In some places a girl's horoscope is rewritten as they consider the onset of puberty as superseding birth. Puberty is celebrated in many Indian communities. These communities believe in cosmology where fertility and childbirth are related to cosmic phenomena of time and motion.

3.7.2 The paradox of virgin and whore

However, today, the girl who attains puberty faces the paradox between celebration of menarche and segregation based on the biological process. At one and the same time an acceptance of her status as a mature woman, and a non-acceptance of her due to

menstruation (a state of impurity and untouchability). At the onset of puberty (in most Indian cultures, including the Scheduled Castes) the girl is segregated to a room set apart or sent out of the house to a place built for this purpose with palm leaves, etc. To the girl it is not only a matter of rejection of her biological process, but her very self. The celebration that follows later often confuses the conflicting situation created by these customs and traditions. This is followed by gender based segregation. Associations with boys are generally forbidden. The anxiety of parents that she can be a virgin or become an whore makes them settle her marriage as early as possible, and within a year attain pregnancy. For the norm set for all Indian women is motherhood. Creation of women is perceived to be as mothers. A mother is honoured for nurturing. A look at the sculpture of Indian women, especially in the vicinity of temples or in art indicates the emphasis on women's body above her waist, of her breasts. The nurturing aspect, of pure white milk is accepted. However, is woman's sexuality accepted?

Gender and sexuality has been discussed in ancient and modern literature. For instance, a Brahmin named Vishnugupta (commonly known as Kautilya) wrote between 321 and 296 B.C. (i.e., just before the Maurya rule), *Arthashastra*, a treatise on the art of government. Chapter xxvii, in the second volume of the book discusses the duties of the Ganikadkshya or Superintendent of prostitutes. Vatsayayana's *Kamasutra*, written 1600 years ago, Manu (the lawgiver's writings) the *Manusmriti*, the *Mahabharatha* and the *Ramayana*, the *Epics*, Yajnavalkya's *Samitha*, the *Vatnika Sutra* of the grammatical school of Panini, are some of the available literature related to gender and sexuality as well as related to prostitution in India. Toward an understanding of femaleness the following discussion takes up the Hindu Cosmology.

3.8 DUAL PERCEPTION OF FEMALENESS: SEXUALITY

3.8.1 Women as sakti

The Hindu Cosmology indicates man as the seed and woman as a field. Woman is conceived as necessary. However, the man is considered as contributing to the hard substance (such as bones) and the woman to soft substance (such as flesh). She along with man is believed to be partaking in the procreative power of god. Woman who is also considered as being closer to nature as representing 'field'. Thus woman as procreative power + nature is seen as more powerful -- as sakti. This sakti is associated with sexuality.

3.8.2 Subjugation of women legitimized

The sakti associated with sexuality if uncontrolled by the husband in marriage, is taken as causing destruction. The life of the goddess Kali is presented before women as the embodiment of destructive power when unrestrained, but under the control of her husband she is subdued. The benevolent goddesses in Hinduism are those who are married and who have transferred control of their sexuality to their husbands. A wife is praised for fulfilling her central role (fulfilling her duties towards her husband, providing him with children, especially a son, and performing rituals to her husband's ancestors). She is considered a good wife. Sita is placed before all wives as a model of chastity. She is called the illustrious wife of Rama. However, unrestrained female power is seen as dangerous and malevolent. A woman who is not under the control of her husband is perceived as uncontrolled or free for all. Female sexuality is considered carnal and sensual.

Woman by nature is considered to be a deceitful and wily creature. Religious texts stress the need to control woman because of the evils of the female character. For instance, Brahma Vaivarta, Prakriti Khanda (16,52-60) states:

(A woman) is the embodiment of rashness and a mine of vices. She is hypocritical, recalcitrant and treacherous ... she is an obstacle to the path of devotion, a hindrance to emancipation ... she is practically a sorceress (a magician) and represents vile desire.

3.8.3 Perception of women's nature as deceitful and evil

While married women are considered as auspicious, widows are looked down on as inauspicious. For instance, a married woman in Indian society is entitled to apply a red dot on her forehead (that is often associated with fertility, blood). The yellow powder (turmeric) she uses is associated with fertility and purificatory measures in marital life as well. The colourful bangles and clothes, the flowers she wears on her head and the jewelry and ornaments, especially the mangalasuthra around her neck (as a symbol of the married woman), the toe rings that adorn her feet placed there at the marriage ceremonial, all proclaim that she is a mangalanari (an auspicious woman). She is considered as having followed the norm set by the society where marriage is the ideal for all Indian women. However, a married woman who bears no child is generally considered as a 'barren tree', referred to as a 'barren woman'. She is considered as useless to her husband as having failed in her duty to provide an issue for the continuation of his future generation. She becomes vulnerable to being put away, deserted or divorced.

Motherhood to an expectant Indian woman is a period when she is at a crossroads assailed by the society's ethico-cultural norms and traditions. For in a society where the duty of a wife is to provide a son, failure to do so might end up in a remarriage or the husband taking to bigamy, or involving in polygamy. While the situation of the wives in this regard often becomes immaterial, the polygamous behaviour of the husbands receives legitimization.

3.9 PREFERENCE FOR A SON IN THE FAMILY/REJECTION OF A GIRL

CHILD

The preference for a son in a family is perceived as facilitating a father's salvation. In the Aitareya Brahmana, the learned Brahman tells King Harishchandra:

The son is a boat of salvation, a light in the highest heaven.

A son is considered necessary to light the father's funeral pyre. In this context, an expectant Indian woman fulfills her husband's need, satisfies the norms of the society, and is thus referred to as the 'sumangali', a greater recognition, higher than the wives who give birth to only girls. The honour accorded to the wife depends on the fulfillment of the wifely roles or her utility to her husband. For marriage is considered as a sacramental union implying a religious duty and necessity, permanent and eternal (see Manu V, 161). Thus marriage is seen as a social and religious duty. The wife is perceived as a comrade and a daughter a misery.

3.10 PROVISION OF DUAL INSTITUTIONS: MARRIAGE AND

PROSTITUTION

In the Hindu framework, among the desires of man, his sexual needs are taken into consideration. In the fulfillment of this desire the conceptualization of male sex instincts as uncontrollable and needing an outlet, permits sex in marriage, and tolerates purchase of sex through prostitution. Although asceticism is advocated at the third stage in the Varnashrama scheme (i.e. Vanaprashrama) through a gradual withdrawal from the family and possessions, and at the fourth stage (Samnyasashrama) a complete renunciation of family and possessions for those who are in pursuit of the spiritual is advocated, for the common man outside, the institution of marriage is the norm and the institution of prostitution is

tolerated. The non-provision of prostitution (for the 'uncontrollability' of male sexuality) is perceived as resulting in rampant rape and disruption of family structure in society.

The provision of prostitution on the basis of male sexuality as uncontrollable, and failure to do so as ending in rampant rape and disruption of family structure, is an historical untruth. For wherever a patrilineal form of society has existed, domination of women has existed in various forms, including slavery and prostitution. Barry (1979) clarifies that prostitution was unknown in the so called primitive societies. D'Cunha (1991) points to the Worli tribe of Dahanu of Thane District, Bombay, which till recently had no history of prostitution in their tribal community. Only now is it being absorbed in the mainstream of capitalism. Generally, a patrilineal system equates male sex drive as naturally active and aggressive.

3.11 AGGRESSIVENESS OF MALE SEXUALITY

Commenting on the aspect of aggressiveness of male sexuality (and passivity of female sexuality) Uma Narayan (1981) explains that male researchers aver that male aggressiveness and sexual virility are dictated by hormones possessed chiefly or solely by males and that male drive is overwhelmingly uncontrollable, demanding a fitting object for release in which terms the female role is defined. However, she clarifies that there is much evidence from animal and human life that disapproves of 'natural' male sexual aggressiveness and female passivity. In relation to the impact of hormones, Davis, D.E. (1971) clarifies that there is a widespread belief that injecting testosterone into a female makes her more aggressive. An injection of oestrogen causes the same behaviour in males and females.

3.12 MALE SEXUAL EXCESSES CONDONED/FEMALE CHASTITY

DEMANDED

While a widower can get married shortly after the death of his wife, a widow is expected to remain a widow till she dies. Although marriages of widows may take place in some communities, by and large these are exceptional situations. Married women (irrespective of whether they have children, son or daughter), at the death of their husbands, are ceremoniously informed of their low status as a widow. In many communities, the customs and traditions that follow the death of the husband clearly indicate the widow's segregation from the main stream of life. Her bangles are broken, the symbols worn during her husband's life (such as the red dot on the forehead, the flowers on the head, the toe rings) are all removed. By the custom of shaving the hair off her head, covering the head, wearing of a cheap saree (especially woven for widows in some places) she is made to realize that she is half dead (as she formed half of her husband, ardhangini, when he was alive). She is considered as a bad omen (having killed her husband, as she ought to have taken care of her husband and died before him). As a person who has failed in her duty as a wife, she cannot take part in other happy ceremonial celebrations and weddings, as she might create some unpleasant happenings as well. As well as considering widows as bad omens, segregating them, in some cases subjecting them to rape and labeling them as prostitutes takes place.

But polygamy is sanctioned for the males as the following texts indicate:

Like a king among his wives thou dwellest (Rig. Veda. 7.18.2)

Further evidence of polygamy can be found in the Brahmanas as well:

One man has many wives, but one wife has not many husbands (Aitareya Brahmana, 3.23)

Polygamy is no fault with men. Women alone commit sin by taking more than one husband (Ashwamadha Parva 14:80).

The males are thus free to involve in marriage, polygamy, in prostitution and to marry again as soon as the wife dies. The sexual excesses of the males are often condoned by society. However, a woman consenting to marry is considered as consenting to have sex at the will of her husband. And even when the husband is conspicuously lacking in virtue, the woman is expected to continue with the marriage.

Though destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure (elsewhere) or devoid of good qualities (yet) a husband must be constantly worshipped as a God by a faithful wife (Manu 5:154).

To marry more than one wife is not sin among men. It is very sinful for a woman to take a second husband after the first (Adi Parva 1.160).

Death is preferable to one who has lost her husband (Mahabharata).

In situations where man lacks virtuous life and/or involves in polygamous lifestyle, the wife has very few options. There are women who continue living in their husband's house in spite of knowing the lifestyle of their husband (due to the commitment made at the time of marriage). There are those who even tolerate another woman in the same house. There are others who with or without a formal divorce separate. Whatever may be the wife's response to the husband's lack of virtue or polygamous behaviour, society generally points to the wife as having been the cause for a man to go after another woman, and in many ways justifies the man's involvement in sexual excesses. The wife who leaves her husband's house (even if taken by her parental family), and all the women who leave their husbands, and widows, are looked down on by society as having failed in their wifely role. Thus, women are categorized as those who follow the norms set for them by society as the 'madonnas', and the others as 'free women' or 'whores'. According to general belief, the 'free women' will end up in prostitution and will become 'whores'. They consider the institution of prostitution as an haven for the discarded women.

3.13 STUDIES RELATED TO WOMEN AND CASTE

Studies related to caste and its impact on women have been carried out by scholars such as Hutton, 1963; M.N. Srinivas, 1962, 1966, 1977; Nur Yalman, 1967; Veena Das, 1976; and Joanna Liddle and Rama Joshi, 1986. Nur Yalman has rightly pointed out that female sexuality presents a threat because of the danger of her introducing low blood or impure blood into the lineage. Veena Das supports this statement as well. However, the impact of caste on the Scheduled Castes women, who form the primary reference group of this study, do not get adequate attention. In fact, Joanna Liddle and Rama Joshi (1986) focus only on women who are in the Indian Civil Service (I.A.S.), women in managerial positions (M.B.A.); and those in the cadre of University lecturers in Delhi in their interviews. Most of these women come from the Upper Caste/Class background.

3.14 SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STATUS IN RELATION TO CASTE

A comparison of Bhatt's analysis of *Social Stratification of the Traditional Indian Society* (Maliekal, 1991:18) and the *Modern Indian Society* (Maliekal, 1991:35) indicates the Upper Castes as having the highest socio-economic and political status at both periods. It is evident from this that from the traditional to the modern period which comprised centuries and many generations, the Upper Castes have maintained the highest position in Indian society. On the other extreme of Indian society is the situation of the Scheduled Castes (or the 'Untouchables') who have remained for centuries and many generations at the lowest socio-economic and political level. The following discussion focuses on some of the current issues in relation to socio-economic and political status in relation to caste.

3.14.1 The nexus of caste-class in Indian society

Economy or wealth forms an important criteria for according a high status in a society. Beteille (quoted in Maliekil, 1991:2) has rightly pointed out that economy or possessions and private property can give access to things that are valued, give ownership of production and even have control over people. If I may add, economy further gives the 'ownership' of labour strength and of labourers as well. For example, in the Indian situation, despite the abolition of bonded labour and slavery, the labour strength is exploited and 'ownership' of labourers exists. The *Deccan Herald* (8.3.93) reports: 'As many as 15 million people, including 5 million children, work as bonded labourers in India, according to an international Labour Organization estimate which is in sharp contrast to the Government's figure of 353,000.' The survey quotes other official sources saying that in agriculture alone there are more than 2 million bonded labourers. The practice is widespread in such other fields as quarrying, carpet weaving and domestic services. *The Times of India* (24.3.84) reports about 10 thousand children below 16 years as having been kidnapped by gangs in Uttar Pradesh in North India, and of being sold to Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Maharashtra, Sikkim, Kerala and Nepal for child labour, prostitution, and used for purposes such as begging.

While the grid of caste-gender-sexuality in the light of economic situation facilitates the advancement of the Upper Castes who hold high paying jobs, the economic status of the Lower and especially of the Scheduled Castes (who are confined to low wages or face unemployment) facilitates an experience of poverty and deprivation. In order to maintain the purity of caste the Upper Caste women are confined to household work as 'insiders'. Due to their high economic status generally the Upper Caste women are assisted by domestic helpers. However, the women of the Scheduled Castes, due to low wages, or deprivation, unemployment, or debts, take up work outside their homes to supplement the family income. Thus, a Scheduled Caste woman is an 'outsider' and often exposed to exploitation.

3.14.2 Caste-class-politics in the Indian situation

Besides, economy plays a crucial role in attainment of political influence, although aspects such as education, occupation and leadership positions do form facilitating factors. Thus socio-economic and political structures could form a link and if vested in the same individuals and groups in a society, as they generally converge, it gives cumulative power and plays a crucial role in the decision making process. In an already socially stratified society with inequalities, the convergence of economic and political power in the hands of minorities, could affect the lives of people as a whole. For instance, Albertina Emelda (in *Asian Regional Conference Report*, ed. Anima Basak, 1989, New Delhi) states:

As far back as 1978, it was estimated that 270 million international tourists in the world spent some US\$75 billion. It is said to be the second to automobile industry in the international trade. Because tourism means such big business, and because the tourism industry lobby is a powerful lobby, governments the world over are prepared to twist and turn and bend all logic to suit the interest of the tourism industry. The simplistic argument put forward by the Government of Goa, for instance, runs thus: Mining is on the wane, there is too much unrest in industry, many small scale units have turned sick and so lo! the golden goose to prey upon is TOURISM (or, to put it more bluntly, the golden goose to prey upon the people of Goa -- their hospitality, their culture, their very lives) ... Then again, the tourist promotion advertisements issued either by government or the big hoteliers are always designed in such a way as to hint about the availability of women, consequently the kind of tourist who is drawn to the place is one who wants women ... Obviously, the bureaucracy is hand-in-glove with the tourism barons.

3.15 MORALITY

The above statements amply testify the association of economics and politics, the crucial role the economic-cum-political powerholders could play in lobbying for tourism, and its consequences, especially on women. In these situations, the role of the economic and political powerholders and the basis of tourism often remain concealed while the women involved in sex-industry become the focus of attention, in the sense that they are perceived as 'morally deviant', 'sexually perverse', as 'creators of public disturbance' and 'source of

venereal disease'. Often how these women get involved in this situation remains unexplored. The sex related entertainment and its link with tourism tend to arise because of tension between morality and economy. Economic interests overlook moral limits and turn a blind eye to its consequences on the local people, especially women. It could be the result of unequal social relations between male and female resulting in domination of the male over the female, it could emerge from the relationship of capital and labour. It could result from erosion of spirituality and moral values.

The above discussions indicate that sexual behaviour is a social construct and not a mere set of biological prompting which do or do not find expression. In the past several decades, sexuality was associated with pleasure as well as pregnancy and childbirth. Gender wise, it created in females a fear of death as many women perished in childbirth and child mortality prevailed. However, today, sexuality is separated from unwanted pregnancies and childbirth, and advancement in medical sciences has minimized the fear of death to a greater extent. All the same, sexuality arouses fear among both sexes (male and female) due to the prevalence of AIDS in society. Despite this fear, the evidence of sexuality severed from its age-old integration with reproduction, kinship and the generations (referred to in the western world as 'plastic sexuality') continues to be utilized as a 'commodity' through prostitution.

3.16 STUDIES RELATED TO SCHEDULED CASTES

However, in relation to prostitution, no study with a primary focus on the Scheduled Castes has been hitherto undertaken. In relation to studies undertaken regarding the marginalized sections of the society, such as the Scheduled Castes, the culture theory of Moffatt (1979) and the power relations theory of Kananail are taken up. The following illustration presents the three theories distinguished by Moffatt.

3.16.1 Culture theory: outcaste images

According to the 'outcaste images', the Scheduled Castes do not have a culture of their own. They are considered as cultureless or culture-free. Some of the descriptions of Untouchables portrayed them as a cultureless people possessing more negative qualities, such as laziness, drunkenness and a lack of thrift, than positive values. If they could be said to possess a culture at all, it was more akin to a 'culture of poverty' described by Oscar Lewis about the urban poor, especially in the United States and Latin America. Gough, 1956; Mencher, 1974; Berreman, 1971 (in Kananaikil, 1983) take a more positive view. Although they do not find a cultural system among most of the Untouchables, these authors consider them as having liberated themselves from the higher caste culture and as having developed a culture of their own. They consider the Scheduled Castes as culture-free.

For spiritual and cultural growth people need to be proprietors of themselves. Culture is something one inherits, which has a tradition, which is therefore largely influenced by the past, a culture adopted from another is not one's own cultural history. Culture is something one receives, one is exposed to. One is shaped by culture. Culture can be inherited and transmitted. It can be created or invented through cultural revolutions too. Very often those who keep the production going, the toiling people, do not have the power to determine the course of events. Those who appropriate the fruits of their labour, are normally the owners of production, the decision makers. Economy is also linked with other structures such as political and decision making power. As such, the living conditions apparent in Indian society are not as simple as the 'culture of poverty' described by Oscar Lewis in relation to the United States and South America. A people who have occupations considered as 'menial' with low income, their basic needs (food, shelter and clothing) unmet, and who suffer malnutrition and disease, cannot be equated with laziness. Their marginalization and segregation from society on the basis of caste, confinement to places with poor health and sanitary conditions, with lack of educational opportunities for

centuries, who have low paying jobs, less income and poor intake of food, cannot be judged as dirty, cultureless or culture-free people, and as economically deprived alone. These situations again point to the structures in society. For instance, Bhagwan Das states:

They (untouchables) lived outside the village and were not allowed to draw water from the village well; they were not allowed to enter schools, they were not allowed to eat decent wholesome food; they were not allowed to walk on common roads; they were not allowed to put on a decent dress and in some states the men were not allowed to wear loin cloth which went below their knee cap and had to wear clothes made of coarse cotton. Those called to tender evidence, had to stand outside the court lest their breath should pollute the courtroom ... they were not allowed to own property or accumulate wealth ...

Dependent people are not free people. The culture that they practice might not be their own. Their own culture could incorporate some traits of other cultures, or be shaped by other cultures too.

3.16.2 Culture theory: models of diversity

The 'models of unity' assume a fundamental cultural consensus between the 'Untouchables' and the rest of Hindu society. This model argues that despite dissension between elements in the system concerning their rank in the hierarchical system, the different caste groups not only complement each other but also are the basic value in the hierarchical value system. Moffatt (1979:303) states: 'Even the "Untouchables" who are at the bottom of the caste hierarchy participate willingly in what might be called their own oppression.'

The constant caste-class conflicts that rock the nation indicate that the situation is not in keeping with the theory put forward by Moffatt. Besides, some of my friends (who comprise various cultural backgrounds, including the Upper Castes) feel intrigued and hurt, even baffled and shocked, when they try to make out why their great ancestors decided to use sex and birth as determinants of one's rank and function in society. However, I present

here the response of the Scheduled Castes themselves (from the primary data collected from a dalit panther in India) in discussing Moffat's theory: 'the models of unity'.

THE LIFE WE LIVE

If you were to live
the life we live
(then out of you would
poems arise)
We: kicked and spat at for
our piece of bread
You: fetch fulfillment and
name of the Lord
We: down-gutter degraders
of our heritage
You: its sole repository,
descendants of the sage.
We: never have a paise

You: the golden cup of
offerings in your bank
Your bodies flame in
sandalwood
Ours you shovel under half-
turned sand.
Wouldn't the world change,
and fast
If you were forced to live
at last
this life that's all we've
always had?
(Tr. Gauri Deshpande)

The above poem depicts the life the Scheduled Castes live, and why for centuries in Indian society they remain at the lowest level of the socio-economic and political hierarchy. The 'Upper Castes' continue to dominate the socio-economic and political fields in Indian society. The sentiment of the Scheduled Castes in response to this situation is presented in the following poem (from the primary data collected from a dalit panther, India):

IT'S REDDENING ON THE HORIZONS

These twisted fists won't
loosen now
Even if you take to your
heels now
The coming revolution won't
wait for you;
We've endured enough; no
more endurance now
Won't do letting down your
blood's call for arms
It won't do;
the seeds of the revolution
Have been sown since long
no use awaiting the explosion now

the fire put is ablaze;
It's for tomorrow.
So use; life's certainly
no more
How will they snuff the fire
within
How will they stop minds
gone ablaze?
No more reasoning now;
Once the horizon is red
What's wrong in keeping
doors open?

(Tr. By P.S. Nerukar)

It is evident from the above poems that the aspect of complementation and the willing participation (see Moffatt p.102) of the oppressed sections (the Scheduled Castes who form the lowest level in the social stratification of Indian society) do not coincide with Moffatt's theory. Besides, this study, which relates to caste and with primary focus on Scheduled Caste in prostitution, takes up the power theory as well. In the light of this Kananaikil's power theory is discussed below.

3.17 POWER THEORY

Social-cultural groups in modern societies do not function as independent and sovereign units. Young (in Kananaikil, 1983:46) points out that the empirical reality of the modern world seems to indicate that the principle of cultural self-determination for para-communities is beyond the pale of reality. There is a tendency among some people to identify the nation with the dominant group or nation. Although the dominant group plays a major role in decision making for the nation and is involved in administration, the identity of the nation cannot be based on this section alone.

Power relations in society can be stated as the interactions between individuals and groups who constitute the nation, who possess in different degrees control over the scarce resources of the nation and possess more or less compatible and independent value systems. These groups, one as controllers of the scarce resources in the nation, and consequently, the other as the controlled who are deprived of their legitimate share in the process, have power likewise in varying degrees to influence the central system. These groups tend to get polarized as the centre-periphery sections in the nation. This situation takes place elsewhere purely based on economic and political power. In the Indian situation it is primarily based on culture groups.

While the power struggle between the cultural groups (the Aryans and dasas) in ancient India is evident in the history of India (see Rig Vedic Literature; *Manusmriti* and Webster, 1992) the social theory of emergence of caste can be perceived as the outcome of cultural conflict and power struggle. The caste system provided a stability in ancient India. One's caste at birth determined the occupation one was entitled to do, the community from which the marital partner could be selected, who his or her relatives and friends were, providing a permanent body of people with whom one could associate. It determined one's diet and observance in relation to ceremonial. The Brahmins were introduced to Vedas, the Kshatriyas to archery and skills in administration, the Vaishyas matters related to trade and commerce. However, in relation to hierarchy Swami Dharma Theerta (2983) discusses the power struggle between the Kshatriyas (kings) and the Brahmins (priests) who were called upon to carry out the rituals related to the coronation of the kings.

However, the possible interpretation for the primacy of the Brahmin could be the closeness to possessing the qualities of Brahman or God. In this respect among people of India, all those who lead a good life pleasing to god (loving God and one's neighbours) could be considered as a godly person or Brahman. Heidi Hartaman (in Liddle and Joshi, 1986) identifies the material basis for men's power over women as resting on their control over two major features: access to economic resources, and women's sexuality. Women's sexuality is controlled by seclusion, by early arranged marriage with or without the bride's consent, and by the ban on widow remarriage. Law and custom permitting only males to inherit immovable property, ensures women's dependence on men.

With the changes in the law in relation to property which have been introduced, and some of the women from the Upper Castes beginning to take up employment, what surfaces as more crucial today is the amount earned by the woman. For in some Upper Class societies a wife earning higher than her husband (and holding a higher economic status than her husband) at times is unacceptable, and even the murder of a woman has taken place.

With regard to choice of marital partners (as the life-histories of prostitutes will indicate in Part II) the present day girls are prepared to leave their homes rather than wed a person against their will. However, in the process of finding a way of making their livelihood, they encounter serious problems for survival.

3.18 IMPACT OF THE GRID OF CASTE-GENDER-SEXUALITY ON WOMEN, ESPECIALLY ON THE SCHEDULED CASTES

The grid of caste-gender-sexuality has been favourable to the Upper Caste/Class males in Indian society. The women of the Upper Castes are generally of high economic status and have the opportunity for higher education, high salaried occupations, health care, etc. However, they encounter cultural constraints such as child marriage, forced marriage, childlessness, polygamous or sexual excesses of the husband resulting in separation or divorce, etc. However, the Scheduled Caste women experience both cultural and economic constraints leading to inadequate income, starvation, malnutrition, disease, debt, unemployment and economic constraints. Thus, the vicious cycle goes on from generation to generation with very little scope for changing the situation. Despite the great strides made in the field of educational development in India, with technical and adult literacy programmes, the situation of the Scheduled Caste women has not made significant progress. A perusal of occupations of women and girls prior to involvement in prostitution indicates this situation: 46 respondents (36.8%) involved in agriculture; 27 (21.6%) engaged in domestic work, washing utensils, cleaning paddy, cutting wood, and as a maid-servant at wedding parties; 12 women (9.6%) carried on construction work, quarry work of breaking stones, and digging earth; 7 respondents (5.6%) undertook daily wage jobs such as clearing fields; 4 persons (3.3%) worked in rag-picking or begging; 3 (2.4%) in sorting wool or worked in a match factory and a plastic factory; 3 respondents (2.4%) sold fish, live animals

and snake skins, or sold fruits (small vendors). One (0.8%) of the respondents belonged to a troupe and earned her livelihood through dancing. Information about occupation was not available from 22 people (17.6%) some of whom were students. Alladi Vagiswari (1972) reports the finding of a survey conducted by the Madras Institute of Development Studies which surveyed the trends of income earned by Harijans (Scheduled Castes) in a district in Tamil Nadu. The survey covered a period of two decades (1950-70). During this period the Harijan's income level worsened and did not keep pace with the price rise. The gap between their income and the non-Harijans widened between two decades. Dr. P. Sivanandan of the Centre for Developmental Studies, Trivandrum (who has studied Kerala economy in all its details in relation to the dalits over the past half century) concludes that a kind of dualism persists between two distinct sections of the population, Harijans and non-Harijans which has its origin in the sociological legacy of the past. Glaring disparities are seen in size and pattern of land holdings, employment opportunity, income level and educational attainment between the Harijans and the rest of society. Barbara Joshi (1986) and Selvanadan (1989) provide further information on the situation of labourers, especially of the Scheduled Castes in relation to their loss of land, and working hours as bonded labourers.

However, the impact of culture and violence on women that makes them vulnerable is generally assumed as women's nature. This indicates a discrepancy between the ideology professed (i.e., their equal origin in the divine, and women as sakti or power). Education needs to give opportunity to women and girls, men, boys and eunuchs -- all alike, enabling them to develop and become performing, participating and equal partners in the process of nation building and development. This would enable, especially the Scheduled Caste women, to be free from economic bondage.

3.19 MALE AGGRESSIVENESS AND FEMALE PASSIVITY

In a society, qualities such as tenderness, compassion and mercy are attributed to women, and aggressiveness and violence are considered as manly qualities. Women who are tender and men who are aggressive are taken as normal individuals. However, a man can be tender, compassionate and merciful, and a woman can be aggressive and violent towards others. Thus qualities are made gender specific and people are expected to follow the set norm as the accepted appropriate behaviour. Thus, male aggression and violence towards women, and female, especially Scheduled Caste, silent suffering or passivity while experiencing violence in their lives could be perceived as being manly and womanly, or as normal behaviour. Besides the concentration of resources in the hands of a minority group could be interpreted as the group being diligent or hard working and the majority group who suffer from want (unemployment, starvation, debt, disease, weakness) could be perceived as lazy and not hard working. In India, where the phenomenon of prostitution is considered as a Scheduled Caste phenomenon, the involvement of these women is perceived as voluntary and as an easy and lazy way of earning their livelihood. The violence in the lives of women is masked by culture.

3.20 CONCLUSION

The concept of human sexuality tends to vary from place to place, from one era to the next, from one culture to another. While the understanding of some people of human sexuality includes aspects such as those related to genital organs, sexual intercourse and the reproductive system, there are others who incorporate other dimensions such as self-concept, sex-drive, sex role, partner choice and patterns of intercourse and the reproductive system. Sex is perceived as a mystery by some perhaps due to lack of knowledge of the

reproductory functioning, or for reasons such as the sacredness attached to it. No doubt, sex is tied up with the person (physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual) which accords dignity and worth to human beings and the right over one's body. Thus, violence (such as rape) forms a violation of human rights.

All the same they admit human sexuality as the expression of one's personhood (manhood/womanhood): who and what one is. Society approves of a man and a woman as sexual beings loving one another and entering a relationship of communion, gift, tenderness and service, and using their genital sexuality in the context of marital life. Human relations that are based on the total self giving of oneself to the other in truthful love is perceived as enriching, fulfilling and providing ecstatic experience, its locus in today's society as in the family life.

However, human beings are cultural beings in their sexuality. They have a history; they are a history and they shape history. Tradition reaches them in the present culture. Ellin Ross and Rayner Rapp (quoted by Jeffry Weeks, 1986, p. 24) state that sexual socialization is no less specific to each culture than socialization to ritual, dress, etc. Since people are exposed to one culture as they grow up, they normally tend to assume that whatever their culture accepts to be appropriate behaviour or as being sexually appropriate.

But the illustration in this chapter regarding the destiny or goal of an individual indicated the attainment of Moksha, Heaven or Liberation. This goal is similar to the quest of followers of other religions as well. However, in other religions there is no need for one to be born an Upper Caste and reach the stage of a Brahmin before attainment of Liberation. For Bhagawat Gita Chapter 9 (Sacred Book of the Hindus), for example, presents a bhakti marga or way available for the attainment of one's destiny or goal. Kripa or grace or compassion does not follow the karmic order of working out one's Liberation based on the caste system. For it states:

Even if a very evil doer / reveres me with single devotion, / he must be regarded as righteous in spite of all / for he has the right resolution (intent) ...

For if they take refuge in Me, ... Even those who may be of base origin, / women, men of the artisan caste and serfs too, / even they go to the highest goal.

Likewise, in Christianity (Luke 23:42-43) Luke points out that while Jesus was on the cross between two people considered as criminals, one of them says:

“Jesus remember me in your kingdom.”

And Jesus answers him:

“I tell you the truth, today you will be in paradise with me.”

However, human beings, in keeping with their understanding and conceptualization of who persons are, and their needs, contextualize framework suited to their culture as conducive to the attainment of personal and society’s goal or destiny. However, in a multicultural society the framework marked out as the ideal for one group might not be favourable to another group under a different culture. What is accepted as culture may even turn out to be a counter-culture from the perspective of the other. Considering one’s culture as ‘the culture’ could mean creating violence in the lives of other cultures or violation of fundamental rights of another.

In illustrating culture and violence in the lives of women, especially of the Scheduled Castes, in prostitution in India, this study takes up one of the ideals set before the followers by all religious leaders: the law of charity or love for God and our neighbour as ourself:

Let not any man do unto another any act that he wisheth not done to himself (The Hindu *Mahabharatha Shanthi Parva* CCLX.21).

No man is a true believer unless he desires for his brother than which he desires for himself (The Muslim *Hadith, Muslim, Imam* 71-2).

Hurt not others with that which pains yourself (*The Buddhist Udanavarga*, v.18).

Do not do to others that you would not want them to do to you (Confucius, *Analects*, Book XII 2).

As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise (Jesus, Luke 6:31).

In our day-to-day living this precept of love can be forgotten or misinterpreted and violence can form part of our culture. For instance, the male authority or power established through the grid of caste-gender-sexuality and institutionalized into socio-cultural, economic and political institutions, and further strengthened by religio-moral and legal structures, can lead to women being casteized, genderized, sexualized and discriminated at various levels. This can result in culture and violence in the lives of women and girls in prostitution in India, as happens in society as illustrated in this chapter. However, prior to taking up this issue in Part II, a brief historical perspective on prostitution in India is presented in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

A BRIEF HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF PROSTITUTION IN INDIA

4.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, aspects such as the holistic approach to a person's life and destiny under the Hindu religio-cultural framework, the conceptualization and contextualization of human sexuality, the institutionalization of these concepts resulting in giving people with casteized, genderized and sexualized identity was discussed. It was pointed out how this grid of caste-gender-sexuality which accords power and prestige to some groups in India was further strengthened by the economic and political infrastructures prevalent in the country and resulted in these groups dominating other groups deprived of such privileges, in particular women experiencing culture and violence in varying degrees in Indian society. Although marriage was upheld as the ideal and the norm set before all Indian women, the institution of prostitution also exists along with the institution of marriage.

The existence of these dual institutions in society, gives rise to understandings such as those which equate marriage with prostitution. Those who argue that marriage is on a par with prostitution state that just as the husband extends to his wife benefits, economic and/ or in kind, the client extends benefits, economic and/or in kind, for sexual favours. Issues such as what is considered as appropriate sexual behaviour in a given society, the sacred or the legal sanction a society accords to marriage, with its commitments, to raise a family, monogamous life, etc. are overlooked. Those who equate prostitution with marriage

focus only on the economic or material transaction that takes place between the client and the prostitute. The issue of involvement of a person in prostitution with multiple sex partners is another distinguishing aspect that is overlooked. In the Indian situation, the ideal given priority before pre-marital sex, extra-marital sex, rape, incest, polygamy, bigamy and prostitution, is union within marriage.

Heterosexual, homosexual, sodomite, lesbian and paedophile relationships take place among people in and outside the institution of prostitution in a society. However, this Chapter 4 confines itself to prostitution in India alone. In illustrating a brief description of prostitution in India, it attempts to point out the dimension of culture and violence in the lives of prostitutes as well. Chapter 4, along with Chapter 3, serves as a background for Part II of this study.

4.1 DICHOTOMY BETWEEN THE BENEVOLENT AND THE MALEVOLENT

The history of prostitution in India indicates that prostitution was an integral part of Indian society. If Parvathi, Lakshmi, Sita and Savithri were portrayed as the embodiment of the highest ideal of monogamous purity and feminine identity (Babb, 1970: 141), Urvashi, Ramba, Misakeshi and Gritochi were presented as the celestial courtesans who danced before the king of the Heavens (Banaparva, Mahabharata, 43:29-30). While married women were presented as female deities who have transferred the control of their sexuality to their husbands (the divine male) and as being transmuted into benevolent beings, the courtesans were portrayed as gifted with immense powers of physical charm, coupled with intelligence, to infatuate the great yogis from their path of self-imposed celibacy. Thus, access to women who maintain monogamous purity through marriage as well as to women outside the marriage bond through prostitution receives social sanction. The existence of the dual

institutions in India thus divided women as the chaste and the unchaste, the benevolent and the malevolent, the madonnas and the whores.

4.2 DICHOTOMY BETWEEN THE ROLE EXPECTATION OF MARRIED WOMEN AND WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION

Women under these dual institutions not only remained divided but the roles they were expected to play in the Indian society also remained dichotomized. The triple duty, or the central function of a married women consisted mainly of caring for her husband's needs: to produce a child or children in keeping with the husband's desire (especially a son), who could light the funeral pyre of her husband and enhance his liberation; to determine paternity and inherit property; to offer rituals to the husband's ancestors. These central duties necessitated that the wife be a woman of an approved cultural background to maintain the purity of blood. In marriage the wife is expected to assist her husband in attaining his goal while her salvation depended on her devotedness and service to her lord (husband). Under these conditions, not love but performance of duty is an important factor in the institution of marriage. It is more a social event than that of two individuals getting married.

However, in the situation of a prostitute, she is called upon to provide pleasure to man. The lives of prostitutes (as indicated in 4.4 and 4.5) demonstrate the roles the prostituted were to play besides extending sexual 'services'. For instance, the courtesans had to be well versed in sixty-four arts such as archery, fencing, dancing, singing, in architecture, chemistry, logic, etc. Thus, duty and pleasure remained divided, and women under these role expectations also remained divided under the dual institutions. Myths further strengthened these concepts (of duty and pleasure) as resting not in one couple but two. This understanding is different from the belief in religions such as Christianity where both duty and pleasure rest in the same married couple.

4.3 HIERARCHY AMONG PROSTITUTES

An analysis of the status of prostitutes in the history of prostitution in India indicates the existence of hierarchy among them. For instance, the post-Vedic literature with reference to the ganikas describe them in their dazzling attire (Basu and Sinha, 1929:65). In Mahanirvana Tantra they are described as asparas or celestial nymphs and as Rajavaishyas or royal prostitutes who lived in the court. The Buddhist history (Therigatha, XXXIX) mentions some of the courtesans as Abhaya's mother Padhumavathi, and others such as Ambapali, Addhakasi and Vimla. Abhaya's son was the son of King Bimbisara (Therigatha, XXVI). Ambapali was considered as the most treasured possession of her city. Vaissali was a poet who became a Buddhist nun (Basham, A.L. 1975:189). Sirima, the beautiful courtesan was a celebrated dancer and musician. In the assemblies of Sulasa and Sirima, 84 thousand people are stated to have penetrated to knowledge of Dharma (Nilanda Panha, VI:4). The Vaishyas (prostitutes) sometimes gave themselves in marriage with Brahmins and Kshatriyas in keeping with the Gandharva system (or love marriage) by virtue of which they aspired to occupy an exalted position - a chance of being uplifted to the ranks of a concubine in an aristocratic harem.

Thus, there is the evidence of prostitutes of that age as having lived in palaces, endowed with beauty and wealth. Some of these 'aristocratic' prostitutes lived independently in big commercial capitals where wealthy merchants lived. Chandra Moti (1976:86) states that an inscription in Mathura, North India, indicates that no stigma was attached to prostitutes and they were even rewarded for their contribution. When the kings return to their kingdom, both the ganikas and the armies welcomed him as an escort of honour (Mahabharata V.86.15; 16:XIII.53.66; Ramayana VI.127.3; Arthasastra Book 1, Chapter 27, Sutra 123-124).

However, mention is made of the presence of 'common prostitutes' in Rigveda (1.85.1). The Epics provide information of the existence of ganikas (Ramayana, 11.51 ff) and of the 'public women' (Mahabharata VIII:94 ff) who were open to visiting by all men. This situation indicates that all prostitutes did not have the same status. In society the women were categorized on the basis of their biological functioning by a single term as 'woman caste' or as 'aarut jati' (see Chapter 3). Nor were they classed together as taking to prostitution because of poverty. Chandra Moti (1976: 81) points out that the courtesans lived in large commercial centres of Bharukachha, Ujjain, Mathura, Kausambi, Varanasi, Pattiputra and Vaisali (North India) where rich merchants lived. During Chalukyas of Badami (6th to 8th century A.D.) in Karnataka (South India) a courtesan Vinopoti is stated to have presented to a temple in Mahakuta a golden seat, a silver umbrella and land of 800 measures (Joardar, 1983).

4.4 LINK BETWEEN THE HIERARCHY OF PROSTITUTES AND THEIR ROLES

Just as those involved in prostitution were considered as 'free women' or 'prostitutes' but their statuses varied, so also, they were called upon to extend sexual 'services' but held different roles. There existed a link between the hierarchy and their roles. For instance, the Greek envoy Magasthenese (324-300 BC) wrote as follows :

Amazons guarded the emperor's harem and formed the main bodyguard of the king. Any food to be eaten or any garments, flowers or ornaments to be worn, or any scents to be used by the king had to be tested by the courtesans before it was given to him. These women also acted as the security force for the personal safety of the king. They were also very efficient in the intelligence service of the king (Joardar, 1983:29).

Basham, A.L. (1975:184) writes that the Rajarupas were brought to the highways to act as spies under the Superintendent of the city known as the Nagaraka Pradinidhi. He adds:

The texts on Statecraft recommended that special watch should be kept on brothels and that prostitutes should be enlisted in the secret service. This fact was noted by Megasthenus who remarked that the spies did much of their work with the help of prostitutes.

According to Kautilya, the pimps and procurers (Bhandhaki Poshaka) during the period employed young and beautiful girls as spies. These women managed to gain the confidence of the enemy's army chiefs, excited jealousy and suspicion among them and led them to their destruction Chandra Moti (1976:75). While some of the courtesans lived in palaces, Chandra Moti (1976: 64-65) states the *dasi* or the 'slave girl' had no admission to the palace.

4.5 STATE ORGANIZED PROSTITUTION AND SYNONYMS FOR PROSTITUTES

Kautilya, who wrote the *Arthashastra* (a treatise in the art of government) provides the following classification of prostitutes with their synonyms in Volume 2, Chapter XXVII:

GANIKA: a prostitute proficient in sixty-four arts who was appointed by Ganikadhakshia (or Superintendent of prostitutes) as a courtesan for 1000 panas.

PRATHIGANIK: a substitute ganika who received half the salary of a ganika.

RUPAJIVAS: are given accommodation along the main highways (*Arthashastra*). They acted as spies under the Superintendent of the city (Nagaraka Pratinidhi).

PUMSCHALI: a low grade prostitute, perhaps in the category of whore, who spied on thieves.

DASI: a low grade prostitute employed for regular spying (Chandra Moti, 1976: 64-65).

A fifth century classification provides a classification of prostitutes linked with graded secrecy of affairs.

4.6 HIERARCHY OF PROSTITUTES LINKED WITH GRADED SECRECY OF AFFAIRS

KUMBADASI: A low class woman who used to act as a maid servant but often ministered to the lust of the menials of the household. If young and handsome, she might include the head of the family as her occasional client.

RUPJIVAS: clandestine prostitutes. They are classified as follows:

The *patricharika* or lady-in-waiting or maid-of-honour in a respectable house. She forms a secret alliance with the master of the house or any other member of his family.

The *kulata* is a married woman who occasionally without the knowledge of her husband or relatives has relations with one or more men (due to nymphomaniac nature).

The *soairini* goes to one or more men without the fear of her husband or the relatives.

The *nati* lives generally on dancing, music and acting on the stage. She entertains people to earn extra money.

The *silpakarika* is the wife or daughter whose earning through prostitution is shared by the male members of the family, such as father or husband.

The *prakasavinashita* involves in prostitution during her husband's life-time and after his death.

Thus, the clandestine prostitution which existed in those days involved married women as well. However, a married woman, even though involved in prostitution, is considered as an auspicious woman by the fact that she lives with her husband. She can take part in rituals such as those practiced during the weddings denied to single women (unmarried, married but deserted, separated, divorced and widows). However, single

women, though not involved in prostitution, are perceived with suspicion, and any communication with men can be misinterpreted as sexual involvement. Thus, a woman by herself is not given status. She is considered as a relational being. The moment she is separated from her husband (either through circumstances or death) she is marginalized. And if involved in prostitution she is ostracized and stigmatized.

4.7 METICULOUS CLASSIFICATION OF MEN IN SOCIETY AND WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION

A survey of social stratification in India (Chapter 3) indicated categorization of men as Brahmins, Kshatriya, Vaishyas (Upper Castes); Shudras (Low Castes), 'Untouchables' (Scheduled Castes), and those considered as outside the caste system. Women (as pointed out earlier in this chapter and in Chapter 3) are classed as 'female caste' or 'aarut jati' under one term. However, in the institution of prostitution the prostitutes are classified meticulously. Even among the 'sacred' prostitutes, such as the devadasis, classifications existed, namely, Datta, Vikritia, Bhritya, Harita, Alankara and Rudraganika or Gopika.

What is significant is the deterioration of the synonyms used for prostitutes. For instance, among the synonyms enumerated in Hemachandra's study (*Abhidhana-chintamani*, III.532-34) mention is made of *sadharnastri* or strumpet, *panapanyangana* or a woman who could be enjoyed for a pana, *kuttani* or a bawd, *sambhali* or a prostitute. This indicates the low perception of these women in Indian society.

4.8 ATTITUDE TOWARDS PROSTITUTES AND PROSTITUTION

Basu and Sinha (1929:66) state that the lawgivers of the Epic age made efforts to prevent prostitutes from marrying Brahmins and Kshatriyas through Gandarva marriage

system (or love marriage). In almost all samhitas decent people were forbidden to partake of the cooked food of a ganika. Although Jainism dealt with prostitution in a matter-of-fact and candid way, the Jain nuns were cautioned against prostitution. Chandra Moti (1976:50) states:

Drinking houses (Apanagrihas) and the houses with markets in lanes on one or both of their sides were considered dangerous because from these houses the nuns could see the prostitutes who carried on their profession in the adjacent houses.

During the Buddhist Period it was thought that a woman became a prostitute on account of her karma (i.e., as a deserved condition to which a person is reborn for some sin she had surely done in the previous life). But according to Therigatha v. 99 a prostitute is not perceived as being a prostitute for life. (This is similar to the understanding of the Christian faith. For when a person gives up prostitution she is no longer a prostitute). According to Buddhism, a prostitute could cultivate an upward way and escape the prison of sense-desires. Basu and Sinha (1929:114) in reference to Vishnu Samnita, Ch. CIII, 7, indicate that most of the lawgivers scornfully placed both bestiality and prostitution in the same category.

However, a survey of prostitution also indicates that King Peruba of Prayaga married Urvashi (cited in Brahma Purana, Chapter X). Sarvamangala B.N. (1975:75 in Joardar, 1983) relates that the courtesans did not consider it was below their dignity to call themselves 'courtesans'. In Mukerjee, K. and M. Kala (1978:67-68) mention is made of Addakasi who became a learned nun. The inscription in Mathura (North India) indicates that no stigma was attached to prostitution. Even the Jain ascetics accepted them as disciples. Thus, right through the history of prostitution, on the one hand, prostitution formed part of the society though some efforts were made to control it. There is indication of some beautiful, skilled and wealthy courtesans as being accepted. Generally, even if a king should marry (as in the case of King Peruba) he faced a lot of objection. However,

since he is the king no citizen can come in his way. Generally, the king has many wives, and many more women in his harem, and a courtesan is usually included in his harem. These courtesans were well versed in sixty-four arts and thus formed the king's body guard. The rules under state organized prostitution included that in the case of violence against a maiden who is unwilling, the highest fine should be imposed.

The above situation in relation to the attitude towards prostitutes indicates an acceptance of the 'courtesans' or 'prostitutes' by those who patronized them. There was also the indication from Sarvamangala's study (mentioned above) that the courtesans did not consider it below their dignity to call themselves courtesans. However, from others (such as the lawgivers) there was objection regarding partaking of food from them and in marrying them. This indicates that the dimension of pleasure from the prostitutes was perceived as legitimate, but accepting them as persons was unacceptable. Marriage and partaking of food, being intimate and personal bonds between people, were strictly confined to family life and the role of the wife. Besides, women were valued for their assets and not for their person. They were valued for their proficiency in dancing and singing, for their wealth or beauty, for the pleasure obtained through sexual relations. But as 'persons' were they valued ?

(To highlight the underlying philosophy at this point, this study upholds the value of a 'person' not for his or her assets, for what one does, etc. but for being a person -- a human being).

4.9 EXPLOITATION OF PROSTITUTES

Most of the writers on prostitution are men. All 'prostitutes' are referred to as women. The institution of prostitution is perceived in history as a female phenomenon.

Groups of women are maintained for pleasure, for funds towards maintenance of army and police, for security of the king and the state. Those under the state became state property and had to follow the regulations promulgated periodically. They were fined and penalized for non-conformity to the rules. For instance, for not complying to the wishes of the king to cater to a man of his choice could lead to a fine of thousand panas. Another alternative being that the woman submit to thousand whippings. Both the superintendent of prostitutes (Ganikadkshya) and the superintendent of the city (Nagaraka Pratinidhi) under whom they functioned were men. The amount received by prostitutes had to be reported to the Ganikadkshya and tax is imposed. Elliot, M. and F. Merril (1950:111-112) indicates that from the seven fortresses where prostitutes functioned an amount of 12,000 fanams went to pay the wages of the police.

However, very little information is given about prostitutes who do not come under the courtesan group. However, the multiple roles the prostitutes were expected to play (besides the sexual 'services') points to exploitation of prostitutes through the state control of prostitution. The ganikas who were trained in fencing, archery, chemistry, etc. were used as body guards for the king and to prevent intake of poisoned food. This entailed that prostitutes had to face his enemies and taste food prior to the king consuming it. In carrying out these role the prostitutes were put at risk. Not only the king but his household were protected. The destiny of prostitutes is seldom mentioned, except under the situation of women in India. For instance, Swami Dharma Theertha (1992) points out that hundreds of women were buried alive when the king died. Exposing prostitutes to the risks of the battlefield could result in death. The interior of the fort in Aurangabad clearly indicates the place where the prostitutes were brought in for entertainment of the warriors. A guide explains how the lights used to be put off at the close of the dance for the sexual pleasure of the warriors. How many of these women returned to the palace after the war seldom receives mention.

4.10 PROSTITUTION DURING THE MOGHUL PERIOD

During the Moghul Period the nobles of the court considered dance and prostitution, as a pleasurable way of spending their recreation. However, Akbar (1556-1605 AD) forced prostitutes of the city to live together in a place outside the capital city and named the place as Shaitanpura or the 'devils' quarters'. Through this he made it difficult for clients to reach prostitutes easily. According to Abdul Fazl (1590:301 in Joardar 1983) Akbar called a number of prostitutes, enquired the names of those who seduced them and reprimanded the persons concerned severely, but his efforts in controlling prostitution proved futile.

During Aurangzeb's reign (1627-1657) most of his laws were directed towards prohibition of prostitution. Mannucci (1907-8, 11. 186) points out that he (Aurangzeb) ordered kanchan/prostitutes to get married or leave the empire. There were six thousand houses where prostitutes lived at this period. But despite all his regulations, not only the Moghul rulers, but Hindu Rajas (such as Baz Bhadur of Malwa, and Raj Indrajit Singh of Orcha State in Rajasthan (North India) were great patrons of prostitutes. Thus, at the close of the Moghul Period, prostitution continued in India.

4.11 PROSTITUTION IN INDIA DURING THE BRITISH PERIOD

Of all the areas of sexual behaviour which embarrassed the British authorities the most troubling situation was the relationship of the British soldiers with Indian women. While the rulers felt the need for a social distance between the rulers and the ruled, some of the soldiers, as Kenneth Ballhatchet (1980:167) points out wanted to marry Indian and Eurasian women. But the remedy seemed plain.

For a young man who cannot marry and who cannot attain to the high moral standard required for the repression of physiological natural instincts, there are only two ways of satisfaction. viz., masturbation and mercenary love. The former, as is well known, leads to disorder of both body and mind; the latter, to the fearful dangers of venereal (Memorandum, Oct. 1886, pp 1888, LXXVII (158), 235ff cited in Kenneth, 1980:10).

Homosexuality was despised as unmanly, and as a threat to military discipline. To involve in 'mercenary love' and to be protected from its dangers, an elaborate system of registration of prostitutes, with regular health check-ups and detention in lock hospitals for treatment of venereal diseases was established. According to Walkowitz, 1974:10 (in Kenneth, 1980) it was understood that these patients in lock hospitals would be women.

4.12 LAL BAZAARS AND LOCK HOSPITALS

A *lal kurti* or red jacket was the recognized uniform of the British soldier, and this term was sometimes used as a synonym for the British Contonment, the barrack or camp area administered by the military authorities. But the term '*lal bazaar*' came to have special significance as denoting the red light or brothel area of the regimental bazaar. A *kotwal* (an Indian officer-in-charge of the regimental bazaar) was responsible for the conduct of the women attached to it. An elderly woman was placed over the women prostitutes. Ballhatchet (1980) provides the names and locations of the 75 such *lal bazaars* or red light areas in India. A few of these were scattered in Pakistan and Bangladesh which were part of India prior to independence in 1947 and in Burma and Ceylon, which were included under the British Empire. These areas were considered as state licensed harlotry centres.

A system of registration of prostitutes was carried out for enrolment of prostitutes. This process involved a health check-up to ascertain that the prostitute was free from venereal diseases. These prostitutes were placed near the regimental area so that the soldiers could have easy access to prostitutes considered as free from venereal diseases. However,

the women in these registered brothels contracted venereal diseases. This gives a clear indication (though not stated as such) that they contracted the disease from the soldiers. This in turn gave clear indication of the soldiers going to prostitutes outside the prescribed area. At this period, prostitutes existed outside the licensed areas as well.

For instance, Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh was the seat of Nawabs (kings) and aristocratic landed gentries prior to British rule. There were court dancers who were greatly patronized by the kings and noblemen. These accomplished musicians and dancers lived in comfort. They often became mistresses/concubines to these noble gentries and formed a group by themselves. However, with the European invasion and subsequently with the abolition of the 'zamindari' system (big landholdings) and local princely states, the economic position and social status, etc. were not conducive to maintaining big harems, nor was there the need for organized prostitution for state security. All the same, prostitution outside the regimental areas continued. The incidence of venereal disease among soldiers and the registered prostitutes continued despite the Contagious Disease Act, periodic check-ups with treatment, and the existence of lock hospitals.

4.13 ANTI-NAUTCH CAMPAIGNS DURING THE BRITISH PERIOD

The nautch girls (nach or dance, nach pronounced by the British as nautch) was in prominence during the British Period as an entertainment programme. Khokar Mohan (October 8, 1983:111) explains that seldom did an evening pass without its performance somewhere or other. Numerous discussions transpired among authorities (see Ballhatchet 1980) some presenting nautch as a pure entertainment of dance and singing, while others argued that it was a form of prostitution. Generally in Indian society, among many communities, a woman or girl dancing in public was considered immodest. A public dancer,

under these circumstances, was considered as a prostitute whether the programme as such involved prostitution or not.

However, letters to the Viceroy (Governor of India) and to the Governor of Madras were submitted requesting that they neither invite nautch girls for entertainment nor to accept any invitation to entertainment where the nautch girls were present. Harvest Field (Vol. V. August 1893:80 in Joardar, 1983) indicates that 1200 signatures were on a petition. The *Indian Evangelical Review* (October 1889:208-9) states that the growth of opposition and feeling against nautch girls was closely associated with prostitution. *The Sentinel* (Feb., 1893) noted with disapproval that Dr. Miller, a missionary who consorted with the upper classes, was a member of the reception committee which organized such a deplorable entertainment for the young prince: 'A nautch dance is performed by Hindu prostitutes, who usually sing songs of the most lascivious character, accompanied by gestures and movements of the body having obscene meaning.' *The Sentinel* emphasized the erotic character of the dance. Dyer (*Sentinel*, April 1893) predicted darkly that in the case of the young men present, such performances were generally followed by acts of sin a few hours after the exhibition (in Ballhatchet, 1980:158). Anti-Nautch campaigns began to emerge from places such as Madras.

4.14 ATTEMPTS TO ABOLISH BROTHELS IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

In the early twentieth century (1921) a constable stopped a funeral which he suspected and discovered that the girl had been murdered by a brothel-keeper. The incident aroused public opinion against the vice (prostitution). An enquiry committee was set up in Bombay in 1921. The Report of this committee stated that there were 5,169 prostitutes in Bombay brothels. The Bombay Prevention of Prostitution Act XI of 1923 was passed. In

1929 the licensing of brothels was withdrawn. Foreign prostitutes were repatriated. A series of Suppression of Immoral Traffic Acts were introduced: in Madras, 1930; in Uttar Pradesh, 1933; in Punjab, 1935 and in Mysore, 1936.

4.15 PROSTITUTION IN INDIA: POST-INDEPENDENCE ERA

The policy of suppression of immoral traffic in women and girls continued with acts in Bihar in 1948; Hyderabad, 1952; the Travancore-Cochin in 1952; Madhya Pradesh, 1953; culminating in the All India Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, 1956 (known as SITA, 1956) which was enforced throughout the country in 1958. Today, India follows the tolerationist approach to prostitution in India (see Chapter 1).

4.15.1 The extent of prostitution in India today

The extent of prostitution in India (the exact number of prostitutes) is unknown. According to Prasad K. J. in *Asian Regional Conference Report* (1989), New Delhi, the numbers of prostitutes of the areas available to him were as follows:

Srikakulam	14	Nellore	70	Kurnool	790
Anantapur	556	Chitoor	102	Adilabad	324
Nizamabad	1,251	Karimnagar	9,313	Warrangal	1,551
Mahaboobnagar	1,428	Medak	384	Nalgonda	68
Ranga Reddy	50	Hyderabad	367	(Total : 16,288 prostitutes).	

D'Cunha (1991), commenting on Dr. Gilada's estimate of 50,000 brothels with 100,000 prostitutes, has rightly pointed out that the estimate of prostitutes in Bombay could be three times the number presented by Dr. Gilada.

A study undertaken by the government of India in Andhra Pradesh indicates the existence of 15,850 village prostitutes (ed. Anima Basak, *Asian Regional Conference Report*, New Delhi, 1989). The women included in this number (linked with religion) are Devadasi, Murli, Bhavani, Sule, Jogin, Basavi, Kalavanthulu, Mathamma, Thayamma, etc.

The above details (though covering only two states in India) indicates that there exists prostitution not only in urban areas (such as the brothel form of prostitution), but in rural areas as well under numerous forms. Towards an understanding of brothel form of prostitution in urban area (Bombay) the following illustration of Suresh Kohli proves useful:

Like every great city in the world, Bombay too has its seamy side and a flourishing underworld. It is world of pimps, prostitutes and pansies, of gangsters, gunmen and gigolos, of thieves and touts, of hootchmakers, housebreakers and gunmen and hoodlums who live on the other side of the law ... Two men, despite the police crackdown, have allegedly emerged as dons of this trade...earning more than Rs. 10-15 lakhs (Rs. 1,000,000 - Rs. 1,500,000) a month. These kings have enough purchasing power to be able to buy MPs (Members of Parliament) and MLAs (Members of the Legislative Assembly). Not surprisingly, their fortunes are aligned with State Governments. (*The Illustrated Weekly of India*, October 31, 1982).

While Suresh Kohli's illustration focuses more on the economic dimension of prostitution, Colaabawala (1981, 25-26) discusses persons involved in the institution of prostitution in Bombay, thus providing an insight into the working of the institution in which the mortgage of prostitutes by brothel-keepers, and of their personal belongings by the clients, etc. are included.

Bombay's red light area is a senuous and sinister underworld. There are over 50,000 randies, 20,000 bhadwas, yars, dadas and mawlas, over 6000 gharwallis, goons, thugs and other goondas involved in violence and narcotics...15,000 male prostitutes or hijras with an equal number of their agents.. landlords, ... money-lenders, pimps, procurers. ... There are 300 pawn shops run by thrifty money-lenders. Men...often short of money and they mortgage not only their watches, radios, but even their clothes on their back ... The yars and the gharwallis in need of money mortgage the prostitute under their control with the 'Seth'. I have checked these names with the roles of the Municipal Corporation and Maharastra State Legislature voters of this area. They tally.

The four-year national study in which I was involved (1983-86) indicated Bombay (the gateway of India and the commercial capital of India) and Delhi (the capital of India and the administrative capital) as the greatest demand centres for women and girls for prostitution. Of these two cities, Bombay emerged as the biggest demand centre based on my observation during my extensive fieldwork in the country as well as on the findings of this study.

4.16 CONCLUSION

Popular opinion in India which considers that there is only one form of prostitution (i.e. in the red-light areas alone) as prostitution and attributes the origin of prostitution in India to the British Period. However, a brief perusal of history of prostitution in India (carried out in this chapter) indicates that prostitution in India assumes various forms (such as 'sacred', 'traditional singing and dancing girls' and 'clandestine' forms of prostitution) and the prostitution that is carried on in the red light areas is only one of the forms. The history of prostitution in India indicates that some of these forms of prostitution were highly organized under the Hindu rajas (kings) prior to, not only the British Period (eighteenth to early twentieth century), but before the Moghul Period (sixteenth to eighteenth century). Apart from the Hindu literature, the Buddhist and the Jain literature provide ample evidence of the existence of various types of prostitution in India. Thus, prostitution in India has a long history, and existed in various forms, some of which were highly sophisticated (for example, the organization of the ganikas by the state by the kings, and the devadasis connected with temples and priests).

However, with the coming of the British, another form of licensing of brothels, a process of recruitment of prostitutes for British soldiers, and compulsory health check-up of prostitutes was initiated to cater to the sexual satisfaction of the British soldiers, and to

detect and treat venereal diseases among prostitutes and clients as a preventive measure. But as this approach was unsuccessful (as the soldiers went beyond the approved brothel areas), and venereal diseases could not be controlled, this approach was later abandoned. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the licensing system of brothels was withdrawn, foreign prostitutes were repatriated, and new laws were enacted to prevent trafficking in women and girls.

Despite the efforts made by the British, various forms of prostitution that existed prior to the coming of the British, continued along with the prostitution in *lal bazaars*. Further, the abolition of kingship and the zamindari system weakened the existing systems such as the maintenance of the harem, and patronage of the traditional singing and dancing girls. One of the reasons for the persistence of these forms of prostitution in history can be detected as division among people regarding the institution of prostitution. There is evidence that some of the Hindu lawgivers were strict about marrying prostitutes, and taking food from them. There were kings (such as the Mughal emperors Akbar and Aurangzeb) who made efforts to control prostitution and easy access to prostitutes. However, prostitution continued in India, whether the Hindu kings, Moghul and British rulers existed or not.

Another significant reason for the maintenance of the institution of prostitution that can be gathered from the literature available is the approach to life in society of the man (towards attainment of his personal and society's goals). Although the belief is that man and woman had a common origin in the divine, with regard to his destiny or attainment of goal or destiny, woman is marginalized, and man's goal is given priority. Marriage for performance of the central duties by the wife, and prostitution for purchase of sex for pleasure co-existed. A woman's salvation depended on her faithful fulfilment of her duties towards her husband who is her lord, while the structures provided in society focused on man's liberation or his attainment of Moksha or Liberation. This took the Brahmin as a male

and an Upper Caste to be the nearest to Liberation, and the woman, especially the Scheduled Caste woman, as the most distant from Liberation. This indicates that while in belief man and woman are considered as of equal origin, in practice hierarchy among man and man, man and woman, woman and woman existed in society.

In the prostitution world there is a hierarchy as well. There is an inclination among many people to perceive all prostitutes in India as belonging to one class or one category (such as the *ganikas*, *dasis*, etc.). They were referred to by various synonyms that indicated their 'status' and roles. However, no study to ascertain the link between the 'status' in the hierarchy among prostitutes and their roles with caste has been taken up. This situation makes cultural background of prostitutes invisible and masks violence in the lives of women, especially the Scheduled Castes.

However, one significant observation is that in Indian society, where persons are considered as law-abiding and as 'respectable', men are meticulously categorized into several groups and sub-groups (such as under caste), thus according power and prestige to some groups. Women are referred to together as belonging to one category 'female caste' or 'aurat jati'. But in the prostitution world, which is considered as an 'underworld', and marginalized by society, the prostitutes are meticulously classified, and their 'status' is specified. From the numerous synonyms used for the prostitutes down the ages, one can easily observe the deterioration of 'status' accorded to them by the society.

All the same, irrespective of their 'status', the lives of prostitutes in history of India indicate, that they were called upon to extend various services, besides being available for sexual 'services'. Thus, while married women (wives) were called upon to fulfill their duties towards their husbands and their ancestors, the prostitutes were taken (in prostitution): for pleasure as well as used for the security of the kings and the state. The taxes and fines collected from them were used towards the maintenance of the army and police force. They were punished for infringement of laws promulgated from time to time and for non-

conformity to the king's command, etc. The ganikas, for instance, were considered as the 'state property' and used for the entertainment and services of men. Thus women were perceived as relational beings, living to fulfill man's desires and as facilitators of their Liberation.

Since no study on the caste factor has been undertaken hitherto by scholars, it is assumed by the general public that caste people (the 'pure') do not involve in prostitution. Thus, prostitution was considered by the public as a phenomenon of those outside the caste system, especially of the Scheduled Castes, who are visible. To those who perceive the Scheduled Caste women alone in prostitution, the phenomenon of prostitution is seen as a Scheduled Caste affair, and as they come from lower economic groups, a phenomenon of the poor. In the absence of caste (a unique cultural phenomenon prevalent in India) prostitution is referred in other societies as an economic issue. Prostitution is treated as sex-industry, and considered as an 'occupation', and sexual 'services' as labour and cash received as 'wages'.

However, in the Indian context where caste prevails and has links with other infrastructures (such as economics and politics) the phenomenon of prostitution needs analysis to understand culture and violence in the lives of prostitutes. In the absence of this vital information, this study, in the following chapters 5 to 8 (Part II), illustrates this situation.

Those who advocate prostitution as an occupation of choice believe that all prostitutes are adults, as such their involvement in prostitution as voluntary, and being a voluntary involvement, as free from violence. This group often assumes that if violence existed prostitutes would not volunteer. Those who advocate legislation for prostitution are convinced that as an adult involving in prostitution is a person's right, and commodification of a person as having a value (economic). This is contradictory to the principle of according respect to humans and upholding the dignity of persons. In Indian society where

sexual relations are considered as appropriate behaviour within marriage and considered as a social event, prostitution at global level presents sex as an affair between two consenting adults. Is prostitution in India devoid of the third parties? Can one assume that enforcing law against trafficking in women and girls has controlled trafficking, and prostitutes will always be there for male clients?

Marriage and setting up of a home and a family are considered as an appropriate behaviour for a woman. But, for a prostitute to set up a home with children is taken as inappropriate behaviour. Does that mean that prostitutes have no children? The history of prostitution in India is conspicuous by its silence in regard to children's involvement in prostitution, as well as of the conditions of prostitutes' children.

Besides, the institutions of marriage and prostitution have co-existed in India for centuries. The involvement of men in both these institutions is generally condoned by most people. The single woman, whether involved or not in prostitution is looked upon with suspicion (if not a prostitute already, as one who might be). However, the married woman's link between the two institutions (of marriage and prostitution) remains out of the purview of scholars in their writing on prostitution.

An examination of the writers on prostitution in India indicates that they are mostly men. Their writing focuses mainly on issues such as men's attitude towards prostitution, the organization of prostitution, the duties of prostitutes, the financial benefit to the state and legal measures pertaining to reform. However, the human or the humane encounter, the actual experience of women in prostitution remains unexplored. Their entry, initiation, brothel-life and destiny (respectively, in four phases) -- these aspects have not formed their focus. A society that upholds marriage as norm for women to some extent provides information on culture and violence in the lives of women and girls in society (such as the situation of the married, the unmarried, the deserted, the separated, the divorced and the widowed). However, the situation in regard to culture and violence in the lives of

prostitutes in India (numbering 300,000 or more in Bombay city alone) remains shrouded in darkness. When visible to a few people (who wish to observe their lives) it often appears as the 'woman's lot' in Indian society, where she is called upon to suffer in silence. Endurance to the end of her life is perceived as her greatest virtue. Her virtue lies in being tested to the end (as in sati under fire), or in a holocaust which endures to the last breath, as a sacrificial offering offered up for the well-being of others (especially men) in a society. Her praise is sung or her sati stone is worshipped after she dies, not during her life-time. This study presents a different perspective on women of the Scheduled Caste, who are considered as born 'impure' because of their karma and their involvement in prostitution as 'normal' in society. It illustrates the experience of prostitutes from their perspective. It attempts to interpret it from my background as a sister and with my past experience of working with them.

PART II

Analysis & Findings

CHAPTER 5

RECRUITMENT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Sexual relations (including sexual exploitation) take place in various forms in society (see Chapter 4). Today, marriage and prostitution are the primary institutions through which sex is conveyed in society. In India, sex is legally acquired in marriage and continues to be a social event rather than an event confined merely between two consenting adults (see Chapter 3). However, prostitution is perceived by society as an affair between two consenting adults; or as an affair of communities who are considered as the 'prostitute caste'. The girls born in these communities are considered as not fit for marriage but to carry on prostitution. Sexual relations take place outside these institutions in society either through consent or force. For instance, in a family where parents and children sleep together in close proximity, sexual relations between son and daughter or father and daughter can take place. Rape takes place in various forms at the time of conflicts and wars. Polygamy and bigamy are still prevalent in India. However, this study deals with prostitution.

An examination of the perceptions of society of prostitution indicates that there are many groups. There are abolitionists who condemn prostitution. They point to the ineffectiveness of the law related to trafficking in persons for prostitution. There are others (a minority group) who stand for prostitution as a legitimate profession. There are groups which are against prostitution but support non-interference in the lives of those involved. There are other groups that support the sale of intimacy as a 'thing' that can be bargained for pleasure. But these are perceptions of prostitution mostly held by people not involved in prostitution. Besides, the attitude towards sex is generally not the same under all cultures.

Chapter 5 presents the various typologies of prostitution to which the respondents of this study belong. After enumerating these typologies, the prostitutes are classified under three forms of prostitution ('sacred', 'traditional singing and dancing girls' and 'contemporary' prostitution) based on some of the common characteristics. The aspect of dedication of the girl to the god or goddess, the rituals to be carried out, etc. form the common characteristic of 'sacred' prostitutes. Under this heading the various systems of dedicating girls for prostitution is included. The dimension of training in dance that goes prior to initiation into prostitution forms the distinguishing feature of the 'traditional singing and dancing girls'. Although the word 'traditional' brings to mind the past system of dancing and singing girls, this section will include all girls who are in some way connected with singing, dancing, drama or involved in acrobatics, etc. The 'contemporary' prostitution will comprise of all other types that do not involve dedication to deity (a religious connotation) and dancing or entertainment. However, it will be pointed out later in the study how these are linked in some way in today's society. This broad classification of prostitutes would facilitate a better illustration of culture and violence in the lives of prostitutes (the object of this study) and avoid repetition.

In regard to the understanding of culture and violence in the life histories of prostitutes, Part II focuses on four phases (recruitment, initiation, brothel-life and destiny). It devotes four chapters (5 to 8) as the process of these phases under various typologies of prostitution, and the experiences of prostitutes generally vary. This chapter concentrates on 'recruitment'.

Listening to accounts of the entry of women and girls into prostitution I discovered that prostitutes become involved in prostitution in different ways. Entry into prostitution is linked with the typology of prostitution. For example, a 'sacred' prostitute has to be a Hindu girl around puberty, a 'traditional dancing girl' should have undergone training for a long period, a call-girl or an escort-girl has to have knowledge of languages, training in

socialization, to be independent, etc. In a word, most forms of prostitution involve a process of recruitment. This process of recruitment takes into account particular types of girls in relation to the typology of prostitution concerned. Describing the recruitment strategies, Barry (1979) points out that there are befriending ways, convincing through cunning fraud, kidnap and abduction, and forcing people into prostitution. While these strategies could be universal, how does this function in the Indian situation? For it is my observation that the recruiters induct particular girls in a manner in keeping with the typology of prostitution.

The main objective of the traffickers for prostitution is to aim at a 'catch' that will bring in more money. The third parties generally have in common the profit motivation. Thus they become part and parcel of a particular typology of prostitution, preferably as a full-time procurer on a fixed salary. The clients' requirement is communicated by brothel-keepers and the procurer goes in search of that particular type of girl. There are others, such as syndicates, gangs and organized crime that adopt ruthless measures to entice women and girls and sell them to brothel owners, or patrons (for example, at an auction) for a big sum. There are traditional forms of prostitution where the girl is prepared for dancing and is conditioned from childhood to enter prostitution when she grows 'big'. There are recruitments made without the knowledge of the women and girls concerned through threat or force. The following account illustrates the recruitment process related to 'sacred' prostitution in India.

5.1.1 Sacred prostitution and recruitment: the Devadasi system

'Deva' means God and 'Dasi' stands for a maid or a female slave. Thus the word Devadasi can be interpreted as 'maid of God' or 'female slave of God'. The Devadasi phenomenon is not of recent origin. Frazer (1907:23) points out in his book *Adonis, Altis, Osiris*, that a great mother goddess, the personification of all reproductive energies of

nature, was worshipped under different names by many peoples of western Asia, and with substantial similarity of myth and ritual; and that associated with her was a lover, or rather series of lovers, divine yet mortal, with whom she mated year after year. This commerce being deemed essential to the propagation of animals and plants each in their several kind. And further, the fabulous union of the divine pair was stimulated and as it were multiplied on earth by the real, though temporary union of human sexes at the sanctuary of the goddess, thereby ensuring the fruitfulness of the ground and the increase of man and beast. In the course of time marriage grew in favour and the old communism was discredited. Even a single occasion became repugnant in the moral sense of the word. However, the majority of these women continued to observe the form of religion without sacrificing their virtue. It was still thought necessary to the general welfare that a certain number of them should discharge the old obligation in the old way. These became prostitutes either for life or for a term of years, at one of the temples: dedicated to the service of religion. They were invested with a sacred character.

While agreeing with Frazer's conclusion, Havelock Ellis (1936:232) states: 'As time went on, and specially as temple cults developed and priestly influence increased, this fundamental and primitive idea tended to become modified, and even transformed. The primitive conception became specialized in the belief that religious benefits, and especially the gift of fruitfulness, were gained by the worshipper, who thus sought the goddess' favour by an act of unchastity ...'

In relation to this subject, Hutton (1933:237) states: 'The Asian deity was more often a goddess and in India a god is served, but there is much other evidence to indicate that in India as in Greece and Italy and as also in Asia Minor the mother goddess and a matrilineal system preceded a change to the patrilineal system of nordic or protonordic invaders ...' The custom alluded to above, of dedicating a daughter as a 'Basavi' for the sake of reviving the otherwise imperative marunakathayam (inheritance of matrilineal

system) rather suggests that the practice of dedication in one form or another, real or symbolic, may have at one time been the universal concomitant of the matrilineal system in India as in Asia Minor or Cyprus.

5.1.2 Jogtis or Yoginis, and Devadasis

Among those dedicated, Frazer distinguished two groups, i.e. those following the form of religion without sacrificing their virtue, and those who discharged the old obligation the old way, invested with sacred character. Likewise, initially Jogtis or Yogini (as exist in Kolapur) were the same as Devadasis. But later, among the dedicated, two groups began to emerge, one group (the Jogtis or Yoginis) worshipping, presiding over religious functions, involved in oracle, trance, making known goddess' commands, and another group, Devadasis, who catered to the sexual needs of men, and attended the festivals and rituals. Today, the retired Devadasis are referred to as Jogtis or Yoginis. They carry Jaga (the image of the god or goddess in a basket) and beg. They form one of the agents who recruit girls for the Devadasi system as five Devadasis are required for the dedication. At present this term applies to all retired Devadasis who beg for alms.

5.1.3 Devadasis and Basavis

Dedication of girls to the goddess Yellamma was considered a Dravidian custom of South India. The goddess Yellamma was said to be a Dravidian goddess. However, the Aryans or the Upper Castes, when they invaded the South are said to have absorbed some of the Dravidian deities, such as Yellamma, with the result that the Basavi (a Dravidian custom) was superimposed by an Aryan custom, the Devadasis. Thus we find the Devadasi system associated with the patrilineal as well as matrilineal system. However, the Basavis, though dedicated to the gods or goddesses, do not live in the temple, but function as providers of the sexual needs of men more on a commercial basis with socio-cultural and

religious sanction. Today, the terms Devadasi and Basavi are interchanged in some places, such as Manvi, Karnataka, and refer to dedicated women with minimum religious observances, who are involved in the sale of sex. Kalavanths and Joginis also function as 'sacred' prostitutes. Although the Kalavanths do not follow the religious initiation as earlier (as this dedication is banned, and no longer in vogue at the moment) they do continue prostitution in their community. Like Devadasis, Bhasavis and Joginis, the Kalavanths (women) rarely have the opportunity to get married. Today all these 'sacred' prostitutes generally come from the Scheduled Castes. They are also considered as 'prostitute' communities and marginalized by society.

5.1.4 Nexus of caste in relation to 'sacred' prostitution

One of the reasons provided as the caste basis for 'sacred' prostitution is the history of Rajputs in India. According to this version, to avoid the Rajput women and girls (of Upper Castes) being captured by the Moghuls at war, the Rajputs (who were fighting the Moghuls) had to send their women and girls with servants to the hilly regions of Tehri-Gharwal for protection. In the battle the Rajputs were defeated and destroyed. The women are stated to have married the servants later. In this situation the women were of superior caste and the men of inferior caste. The dedication of their children (a mixed group or 'untouchables') is attributed with giving rise to the dedication of these girls in North India as Devadasis.

5.1.5 Myths related to the caste factor in 'sacred' prostitution

The legend of Yallamma-Renuka is provided as the basis for recruitment and dedication of girls as 'sacred' prostitutes. According to this legend, Renuka is the wife of the sage Jamadagni. She used to fetch water in a vessel made of sand (wet clay). Her virtue (chastity) was so great that she was able to do so. One day while collecting water she

noticed two Gandarvas frolicking in the water. The thought flashed across her mind that if she could have married a handsome Gandarva she could have lived in luxury. At that moment the pitcher crumbled in her hand and she lost the power she had earlier. The sage, knowing what had transpired in her mind, was enraged and asked his sons to behead their mother. The two elder sons did not carry out the order. The 12-year-old youngest son, Parasurama, at once beheaded his mother. The sage was pleased with Parasurama, and offered three boons. Parasurama asked that his mother may be restored to life again. At this juncture a Matangi, a Low Caste woman, passed that way. The sage ordered that she (the low caste woman) be beheaded and her head be fixed to Renuka's body (an Upper Caste woman's body). Thus Yellamma-Renuka became the goddess of both the Low Castes as well as the Upper Caste. The head that gave in to unchaste thought was severed and the head of the Low Caste girl was placed there and she was visible to the Low Castes as one of them. So, Low Caste girls were dedicated to Yellamma-Renuka, and fulfilled her desire for the Gandarva through prostitution, and their marriage was carried out by Parasurama (who was generally represented by a sword). As the body of Yellamma-Renuka is of the Upper Caste, the Devadasi's body is considered as of Upper Caste. These Jogtis or Yoginis who are not involved in prostitution, spend their time as mediators between gods and worshippers. They are invited for ceremonies at festivals of the Upper Castes (such as at child birth). They engage in oracles, in preparing mangalasutra (aljamdasaubhagyavathi) to be worn around the neck (instead of a ring on the finger) at marriage so that the bride will never attain widowhood like the Devadasis. Through their association with Renuka and Parasurama, the Low Caste Devadasis are perceived to have risen in their social status; thus, as 'sacred' prostitutes, acceptable to both the Upper and Lower Castes.

However, an examination of the system indicates that the type of girls dedicated to the gods or goddesses are generally good looking girls. This indicates that this system was deliberately planned to covet good looking and desirable girls for prostitution. For instance,

at the recruitment for the village festival, before the chariots of the gods and goddesses leave the temple for public veneration around the village, a very beautiful girl is selected from the Kalavanthas of the village to offer incense to the deity. Soon after the offering of the incense to the deity, the priest brands her on the left upper arm (or in some villages on the breast) with a heated conch, thus barring her from marrying and sanctioning a life of prostitution. However, my field work experience indicated that not all girls who are dedicated are good looking. However, as my data indicates and my observation confirms, all the dedicated girls today are from the Scheduled Castes. Besides, all dedicated girls are initiated into prostitution at a stage of life when they are considered 'pure', as virgins, and free from venereal diseases. This age or stage of psychological development (dedication at infancy or at pre-school age, and initiation into prostitution at puberty) is an important factor in the Upper Castes/Classes patronage of these girls. Sexual relations at this stage do not threaten the health of the patrons, apart from other motivations such as the pleasure associated with overpowering the indigenous people (dasas) through deflowering their young women at their prime of life.

Besides, all dedications are not done to Yellamma-Renuka. As such it invalidates the myth prevalent in this system. It is possible that the myth has been used to justify the use of the Low Caste girls by the Upper Castes and is a possible attempt to destroy whatever self-respect the conquered people have. Several scholars indicate that the Aryan invasion resulted in their victory and the indigenous people (referred to as dasas or slaves) being subordinated (Kananaikil, ed. 1983). This system of 'sacred' prostitution, seen from this perspective, could be a power relational strategy.

No doubt, among the Scheduled Castes, who are generally illiterate, there are superstitions which propitiate the family deity. However, it could be seen as a system planned to provide a steady flow of virgins, generally good looking and free from venereal diseases, to the temple as a source of pleasure and income. Sexual relations among the

Upper Castes are forbidden on certain days, for example, in some communities on days of ancestral worship, on full moon days, etc. It is significant that the full moon days form important days of initiation among some sacred prostitutes (see Chapter 6), when the Upper Castes could take advantage of sexual access to the Scheduled Caste virgins. The system has an ethico-cultural and power nexus incorporated for the benefit of the Upper Caste/Class groups.

The history of prostitutes had indicated that beautiful Ganikas, dancers and singing girls are dedicated to the temple. It is probable that the uncertainty of patronage of the local royalty because of wars, and the difficulty of maintaining the dedicated girls because of the ensuing financial crisis, might have resulted in recruiting girls and ensuring a stable income for the temple authorities. The temptation for the parents and guardians of economic gain through dedication of the girl cannot be ruled out either. Although today most of the dedicated girls are from the Scheduled Castes and goddess Yellamma is basically the goddess of the Low Castes and Untouchables, it is evident from the temple in Saundatti (Karnataka) that the Upper Castes have patronized the Yellamma temple well (Banhi, 1981/2, p.20). This situation can be taken as extending socio-religious sanction for dedication and prostitution that follows at the next phase, i.e. at puberty, at the stage of initiation. In the following section Devadasis and Basavis speak about their recruitment process.

5.1.6 The process of recruitment

5.1.6.1 Dedication decided upon and carried out by parent(s) or guardian(s)

Case history 1

Kanaga, a Devadasi in her thirties from Nipani, is seated near a temple in the North West border of Karnataka, begging. She states:

I do not know at what age I was dedicated. When I came of age (attained puberty) I was thrust into prostitution.

The above statement of Kanaga provides valuable insights into the Devadasi system that exists in India today: firstly, it indicates that the dedication took place at an earlier age or stage of life she is not aware of and unable to recall. One of the obvious reasons is that the decision to dedicate girls is made by the parent(s) or guardian(s) and the dedication is carried out when or before the child is six years old. This situation is not a voluntary entry into prostitution and as such is not in keeping with the assumption of those who strive for legalization of prostitution. Human rights infringement in this form would continue to take place under this system

Secondly, in the Indian context, on festival days people visit temples and present their offerings of flowers, coconuts, and numerous other items of value they can afford. Some of the rich people offer cash and jewelry made of silver, gold and precious stones to the deity. Generally, the numerous items or articles that can be presented to the deity are sold in the hundreds of shops that exist in and around the temple premises. Streams of people visit the temple. Amidst music and fairs, buying and selling, meeting one another, merry making, it is a time when a spiritual atmosphere seems to pervade the whole temple. With fragrance of jasmine and scented leaves, lights, incense and bells, offerings of flowers and coconuts are accepted by the priests. Some of the offerings are returned after the short service to the deity to the devotees. In this atmosphere (especially if it is on full moon Devadasi festival days) childless parents pray for the gift of a child, and take vows to offer the child, if a girl is born, to them. There are other Devadasis, Basavis, in the temple, presenting their annual offerings to the deity. There is the dedication of new children. In this atmosphere it would be difficult for a child to understand that it was her dedication. Often later, as she grows up, she becomes aware of her dedication.

I visited Neermanvi, a place in Karnataka where girls are dedicated. I surveyed the place several days prior to the festival day to understand the layout, the place of dedication, and to find a suitable place I could occupy on the festival day. Great preparations were going on in a huge open place. A distant lonely rural setting was in the process of being transformed into a big 'city', with all amenities of shops, hotels, transport, with facilities such as water supply, electricity, and police services for the coming event. Although the temple itself is quite big, the place where the dedication takes place is very small. It is situated right in front of the main entrance to the temple. It has one door and a stone altar where offerings of Devadasis are accepted and dedication of children takes place. To witness the different ceremonies or distinguish a dedication ceremony, one has to stand near the altar. In a situation where the whole family participates in an event, with devotees and onlookers, traders and shopkeepers, procurers and clients, all gather, there is always a stampede, it is not easy for women to enter in and come out. The police are present, yet as my companion states, they are unable to lift their guns because of the crowds pressing on them. (Other arrangements or more police could ease this situation.) In the existing conditions, standing at one place to observe the dedication was out of the question. Besides, the crowd keeps moving, and no individual has a chance to leave, once in the crowd. A group of men (volunteers) offered to stand at various places to observe if any dedication took place. However, reports from these volunteers indicated that there was no dedication at that festival. One of the factors for this could be the knowledge of the presence of our team (volunteers) in the vicinity. Our earlier visit to the spot and our stay in Neermanvi had reached people concerned. Perhaps there might have been fear on the part of the organizers that we might cause publicity or take legal action or start a mass movement, and this might have stopped dedication at that festival. However, the age of dedication is an important factor and prostitution forced upon the child by adults indicates culture and violence in

relation to 'sacred' prostitution which has several systems, with slight ritual variations and names.

Thirdly, it is evident from the statement of Kanaga: 'When I came of age I was thrust into prostitution' that at this age (coming of age or puberty) she knew what was taking place. It has made an impression on her. This experience she expresses as 'I was thrust into prostitution.'

This means that she was forced into it suddenly, unexpectedly or without prior preparation or consultation. This has made a significant impact on her life and this will be discussed under initiation (see Chapter 6).

The above situation, according to Stewart and Healy's (1989) general developmental model, expresses how social experiences take on individual meaning over the life course. This model begins with the assumption that one important factor in the attachment of individual meaning to social events is an individual's age, because of connection between age and stage of psychological development, at the time of the social event. Another important factor Stewart and Healy point out is the degree to which an individual is identified with a cohort, or what Mannheim (1952, 1952) called a 'generational unit' that is a group of people of roughly the same age who shared some crucial experience. This brings us to the experience of not only Kanaga, but similar experiences of most of the 50 Devadasis and 200 Basavis who formed the sample of the two studies undertaken by me. I further provide some statistics in this field from Dr Gilada:

These dedicated girls form 15% of the total women in prostitution in India and in the border districts of Karnataka and Maharashtra States their percentage is nearing 70 to 80% of the women in prostitution ... Estimated dedications each year -- above 10,000 -- About 5,000 on full moon day coinciding Jan/Feb and rest all around year on full moons (Report of Asian Regional Conference, New Delhi, 1989:71-72).

Thus the above experience of Devadasis is not an isolated event for an individual, but the experience of most of the Devadasis of this generation. As such, it can be considered as an example of the cohort identified by Stewart and Healy. Further, in the Indian situation

in relation to the experience of Devadasis, i.e. that most of them do not know when they were dedicated, forced into prostitution and sexually exploited, they undergo as well a common experience of marginalization in the Indian community as the 'culturally low', as 'Untouchables' or the Scheduled Castes prostitutes. The impact on them of being seen as culturally low ('Untouchable') and as prostitutes (the lowest among the 'impure' Scheduled Castes) can be stated as having a severe impact on their lives.

Among the few who come to know some details of their dedication are the children who wear symbols. During my fieldwork I did come across several children at play who wore symbols around their neck of the deity to whom they were dedicated. Besides goddess Yellamma, they were dedicated to gods such as Parasurama, Ganesha and Hanuman as well. The symbols were in different forms, such as in the shape of two feet of the deity hanging down from the string, or engraved on metal plates in the shape of a diamond. However, children do not seem to take any notice of them. Often they become conscious of the implications as adolescents or at young adulthood. As Braungart, 1975, 1976, 1980, Erikson, 1968, 1975, Mannheim, 1952, Steward and Healy, 1986 (in Amia Lieblich and Ruthellen Josselson, 1994:p. 233) state: 'socio-historical events experienced in late adolescence or young adulthood are likely to have quite different effects'.

5.1.6.2 Vows taken to dedicate the daughter by the parents

One of the modes of recruitment or a pattern followed for dedication is for parents or guardians to take vows to dedicate the daughter as a Devadasi or Basavi and subsequently to fulfil their vows. That is, parents without issue promise to dedicate their daughter as a Devadasi or Basavi if the child is born to them. Thus the girl's future life is already fixed for her by her parents before her conception. Generally, the child is not told the motivation as to why she was dedicated. However, Kupppamma from Dessyarahatti on the Athani-Bijapur road communicated the following information about her dedication.

Case history 2

Kuppamma states:

I was dedicated in Saundatti when I was an infant. My mother lost the first child at child birth and made a vow to dedicate the second child if a girl as a Devadasi. I was born next so I was dedicated.

As marriage is linked to procreation, the childless married couples are perceived as having not fulfilled their role in society by begetting children. Hence they look forward to the birth of a child for the fulfilment of their desires and to fulfill the expected role by society. This makes them undertake vows, such as a promise to dedicate the child (if the child happens to be a girl) to the goddess through whose favour they consider they have given birth to a daughter. The childless wife experiences fulfilment at the birth of a child because she is no longer considered a barren woman. She has fulfilled her role as a mother by nurturing her child. Her status is raised as a wife and a mother, and now as a mangalanari or saubhagyavathi she is entitled to membership among those who have experienced and fulfilled motherhood. She can be a model for other women and take part in rituals related to marriage and at auspicious gatherings and events as a 'good omen', a fruitful wife. They consider dedicating a 'goddess given child' to the goddess herself is the best way to express their gratitude and appreciation for what she has done to them. Giving the daughter to gods and goddesses is considered as higher than giving to men in marriage. Marriage with the god or goddess (at initiation) is considered the fulfilment of their duty as parents. Further analysis on the issue of giving away the girl child in Indian society will be discussed shortly. While the parents' motivations for dedicating their children as a Devadasi may vary, the Devadasis themselves are seldom aware of these motivations. However, Maramma is one of the few who came to know the reason for her dedication.

5.1.6.3 Development of jat

Case history 3

In the situation of Maramma from Sirsangi, although the age of dedication was unknown to her, she had been told that she was dedicated because of the development of jat (or matted hair). Maramma states:

I do not remember my dedication. I was very small. But I was told that I developed jat.

Girls in India, especially in rural areas, grow their hair long. Some of them can be seen with matted tangles in their hair hanging from their heads. If a patch or strand of such matted hair is identified it is interpreted as a call from the goddess 'mother' to serve her as a Devadasi. She is not meant for a married life but to be dedicated. This type of matted hair can be observed on the heads of yogis with long hair who have renounced their families and spend their lives in asceticism in places such as Rishikesh and regions at the foot of the Himalayas. These high mountainous areas are considered Kailash or heaven and as the abode of gods, an ideal place for meditation and god-experience. In their quest for the spiritual the bodily needs are considered immaterial. This is evident in their neglect of care of their hair, i.e. the presence of long matted hair. This could be one of the reasons why the matted hair of a girl, though in reality because of lack of health care due to water scarcity in the villages of India, is associated with a religious call to be a Devadasi or 'maid of god' or a 'slave of god' or a 'sacred' or 'religious' prostitute. Further, the association of hair with sexuality, and with life itself is evident in the custom of offering the hair of children ceremonially in the temples. Both men and women return from temples with joy after offering their hair (the head completely shaven) as a sign of offering themselves to gods or goddesses. As such, the girl with the matted hair is seen as a person offered to a god or

goddess who ought to use her sexuality not for herself, for her pleasure, but for the god or goddess she is dedicated (or married) to through prostitution. As an auspicious 'sacred' prostitute she is expected to cater to the sexual 'needs' of men, and when she can no longer do so, either because men do not come to her or because of disease and ill-health, she is expected to beg for a livelihood with the basket she is given at the rituals.

5.1.7 Devadasis in the family

As a married woman is to fulfill man's need for procreation through marriage, the 'sacred' prostitute is expected to fulfill men's 'needs' (by extending fertility to his farm, etc.). And this tradition (which has been described by Frazer, 1907 quoted earlier in this chapter) has been going on for generations in Indian society. The following case history confirms this situation.

Case history 4

Thirty five year old Nagamma from Gonnagara in Ramdurg Taluk of Belgaum District states:

I was dedicated when I was very young. My mother and my grandmother were Devadasis as well. I have to work in the fields to make both ends meet.

The above saying of Nagamma indicates that the dedication as Devadasi is not a matter of vows made and response by parents in one generation, but as a series of dedications that covered three generations through which the fertility of farms and beasts are facilitated. The dedication is also perceived as a means of increase in income through working in the fields. Thus, the involvement of dedicated women is perceived as a cultural and economic phenomenon. Thus, mere passing of Devadasi Acts forbidding dedication is insufficient. It has to be tackled on the basis of culture and economy. It also calls for an

examination of the literacy level of the Scheduled Castes, especially in relation to female literacy so as to facilitate opportunity for selection of other occupations.

5.1.8 Low literacy

Despite the notable increase in literacy levels of the Scheduled Castes from 10.3 to 21.4% during 1961-81, they are still far lower than the general male literacy level of 24.0 to 36.2% in the same period. Scheduled Caste male literacy levels of 17.0 to 31.1% in comparison to the general levels of 34.5 to 46.9% and Scheduled Caste female literacy levels of 3.3 to 10.9% level of 13.0 to 24.8% during 1961-81 are deplorably poor and indicate wide disparity between the Scheduled Caste and non-Scheduled Caste population in India (M.E. Prabhakar in Bhagwan Das and Massey, eds 1995, pp. 103-104).

The total number of students at the undergraduate and post graduate levels and professional courses 1978-79 (as per p. 309. 28th RC SC/ST 1986-87) indicates a total of 2,543,449 students at all-India level, of whom 180,058 (7.08%) belong to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. This percentage no doubt consists of mostly the males, as the female literacy continues to be low. For instance, the female enrolment for 1985-86 for primary school I-V is 7.61% and for secondary school (old and new patterns 10 + 2) 4.19% (as per p. 295. 28th RC SC/ST 1986-87). The low literacy level, no doubt, is linked with low job opportunity and income. In the Indian context it is a cultural factor as well.

However, the New Economic Policy (1990-91) does not augur well for the Scheduled Castes. As Prabhakar points out:

External debt by the country and induction of massive foreign aid and investment into the country, have their heaviest toll in the dalits (and tribals). The stabilization and structural adjustment programmes, as part of the (World Bank, ADB and IMF) loan conditions, result in sharp devaluation and financial austerity and credit squeeze, leading to inflation and economic recession, as well as in the increase of unemployment (due to reduction of investment and production) escalation in mass transport costs and cutbacks on expenditure on education, health food and other social welfare programmes. The Union Labour Minister, P.A. Sangma has predicted that there will be 65 million unemployed by 1977 and 106 million by 2000 AD (M.E. Prabhakar in Bhagwan Das & Massey, eds. 1995:111).

The vigorous debate in relation to the reservation policy exists in India today. This was a policy of reservation of seats in public service introduced in 1918 by the Kannadiga

Brahmins of Mysore who felt threatened by the domination of Tamil Brahmins, and was later in 1919 made in favour of Muslims and minorities. This reservation was abolished in 1946 in favour of all religious and other minorities excepting the 'Untouchables' who were called Scheduled Castes. This provides reservation in legislature and public service (27%). However, according to Bhagwan Das (& Massey, eds. 1995:71), this reservation has not been properly implemented during the last 50 years. Prejudice against the higher education and employment of the Scheduled Castes continues to exist.

5.1.9 Scheduled Caste women: the less educated and those in low paid jobs

Dr Kanahare's study (1984, p. 6) states: 'Gola (rice pounders) women continue cleaning grains, Rabari (cowherds) keep cattle, Khala women do rope making while their husbands work at secure blue collar service jobs.' Karlekar (1982, p. 130) states: 'In Delhi, while men in Balmik caste are able to come out of the defiling caste occupation women continue to remain in this low paid, unclean work ... The new Municipal corporation, for instance, has 'chuhars' as sweepers, 'Bhists' to carry water. This is done mainly by Dalit women. Aggarwal's study on agricultural modernization, suggests that technological change resulted not only in displacement of women but increased disproportionately the work burden on poorer women.

An analysis of data in relation to the occupation of prostitutes who formed the sample of 125 in the study on the caste factor in Bombay (1987-1990) at the time of entry into prostitution indicates the following: those engaged in agriculture (46); household work (17); cleaning paddy or rice (1); construction work (6); digging (2); breaking stones (4); daily wage 'coolie work' (6); domestic servant (6); maid servant at wedding parties (1); housework or work in the fields (1); work in match factory (1); work in plastic factory (1); dancing and acrobatics in an entertainment troupe (1); sale of fish (1); sale of live animals, animal and snake skins (1); selling fruit (1); sorting wool (1); washing vessels (1); cutting

wood (1); rag picking (2); begging (2); student, not applicable (2); information not available (20). The above details indicate that the prostitutes as a whole, despite their cultural background (as Upper Castes, Scheduled Castes, and caste not applicable) were involved in traditional jobs with the exception of two respondents who worked in factories.

Despite being engaged in the above traditional occupations, only 60 respondents received cash and/or kind. Their monthly incomes are as follows: Below Rs.100 (6); Rs.100-200 (32); Rs.200-300 (18); Rs.700-800 (1) and Rs.3,030 (1); and two in kind. The details of cash and/or kind received varied: cash and a meal (28); cash (Rs.12) and two meals (1); cash (Rs.30), food and clothing (1); cash (Rs.60), food, clothing and rent (1); cash alone (27). One girl's income (amount unknown) went to the family directly. This situation of women in prostitution indicates that the situation of women from the Upper Castes (29) was fairly good. These women and girls were engaged in household work, studies, or work in their own fields (not for income). However, the situation of other prostitutes, especially the 69 prostitutes from the Scheduled Castes is one of deprivation. This indicates that the economic developmental programmes have not made a significant impact on their lives. However, what is significant is that the jobs considered 'menial' or 'low' in India, with low wages, are being done by people in other countries as well, however, these are not treated as 'untouchables' and marginalized. Besides, these countries do not have particular group of under caste who are destined for generations to carry out these jobs considered as 'menial' and to live on meagre income as deprived people for generations. For the reason of being born in a Scheduled Caste family (not a choice of their own), they cannot choose a job of their own. If father is a sweeper, the family is counted as a family of sweepers, with job availability only in this field. Although a change is taking place, the occupations of the prostitutes from the Scheduled Castes indicate their day-to-day struggle for survival. Nagamma in case history 4 states that her mother and

grandmother were Devadasis, and that they had to work in the fields to make both ends meet.

5.1.10 Socio-economic and cultural factors

Case history 5

Muniamma is 25 years old. She was dedicated when she was about six years old.

She states:

I belong to Belgaum District. I have two brothers and two sisters. I was dedicated because my family had some understanding with the farmer's family for whom we used to labour. This apparently means that one of the heads or one of the men of the farmer's family took a fancy for me and offered to meet the cost of my dedication in return for his rights as a patron. I work in the field from morning till sundown. I receive Rs.2 for all the work I am asked to do. Besides I have to sell myself to make both ends meet.

The patrons of the Devadasis generally come from the Upper Castes/Classes as it involves a high price. In some places an auction is arranged at puberty and the highest bidder deflowers the virgin. Christine Aziz reports in *The Guardian* (Saturday, June 10, 1995) of a recent sale, the auction of a 12 year old Hamanta after puberty in a tiny temple outside Saundatti: 'She was sold to a 67 year old landowner for Rs.20,000 (about £333). Her fate is likely to be that of other young Devadasis. She will stay with him until he tires of her and then she will be passed from one man to another, probably ending up as a prostitute in one of India's main cities.' The 50 Devadasis and the 200 Basavis who form the sample of my studies have life-histories where the first patrons generally hail from the Upper Caste/Class.

5.1.11 The farmers family who 'took a fancy for the girl'

In the situation of Muniamma (case history 5) the dedication was preplanned. Although in most cases the situation is presented as the economically poor parents selling their daughters (as in the case presented by Hamanta), Muniamma states that her family had

an understanding with the farmer's family or one of the men of the farmer's family who 'took a fancy to her'. As Devadasis explain, the suggestion generally comes from the patron's side. The patron's wish is seldom denied as the survival of the family greatly depends on good relationships with the landlord. Denial could result in another form of taking away the girl.

Having given consent, preparations are made for the forthcoming initiation ceremony into prostitution. While the next phase of initiation will be taken up in Chapter 6, at this point the link between 'sacred' prostitution and 'contemporary' prostitution is presented below.

5.1.12 Devadasi system: a recruitment system

Case history 6

Renu is in her twenties. She states:

I am a Devadasi. My three sisters are Devadasis too. Of the three sisters one of them is in Foras Road (Bombay red light area).

Today the Devadasi system functions as a recruitment system as well. It links rural and urban 'sacred' prostitution'. It forms part of contemporary prostitution in urban areas. Not only does dedication require the solemn duty on the parents and/or guardians of initiating the child into prostitution at puberty, but with it there is the need for finance to carry it out. The rituals associated with the initiation function that begins in the temple are made on payment. Costs of Rs.100 in some temples for dedications have now risen to Rs.500 and Rs.800. 'If priests were convinced of the bonafides of those who approached them with requests for dedications and if large enough sums of money were offered, the going rate for a dedication in Saundatti is Rs.4,000 to Rs.5,000' (Banhi, 1981/82:22). The Upper Castes have direct or indirect influence in maintaining this ritual-bound prostitution.

Besides, the drought prone area of the Devadasi belt still remains underdeveloped despite its natural resources, such as water, available in the country. This situation makes the Scheduled Castes depend more and more on the Upper Castes for work, to meet their economic needs for survival, for when they are sick, for festivals and for marriage or death ceremonies. There are customs such as the Devadasis coming together on 'Holi' and 'Okali' festivals when men give saris and blouses to the Devadasis. The Upper Caste/Class function as patrons and the 'pedestal status' accorded to the Scheduled Castes through this system, makes them believe that dedication of their children is an acceptable way of life in society. Aspects, such as whether an elderly man in his sixties (perhaps infected with disease) is sexually exploiting a young girl of 11 or 12 years, creating violence (and perhaps infecting her with his disease) are seldom considered or negotiated. The belief that whatever the child's experience is going to be is her karma (considered as her desert for her past actions and nothing can be done about it) perpetuates an indifferent attitude towards violence exerted on the child at deflowering and after by men. This fatalistic attitude in this dedication or recruitment approach hides the exploitation of girls, especially the Scheduled Castes, under the religio-cultural practices.

Perceiving the situation from the angle of the child it can be a great injustice. In the light of one's right to choose one's way of life a great injustice is done to the child by adults choosing a way of life for her. The right over one's body is infringed by infecting and sexually exploiting the girl through this system. The 'human rights' viewpoint permits prostitution as a human right. However, this form of child abuse that continues to adulthood is tolerated. For the Devadasi system continues to exist in India. Efforts made by organizations to protect women and girls in 'sacred' prostitution are taken as an attack on the religious system of dedication to gods and goddesses. Muniamma, a Devadasi interviewed in North Karnataka in 1986 states:

Look at my state. My whole body is full of sores. I am unable to do anything. It is my parents' moodathanam (ignorance/stupidity) that made me come to this state ...

While this dimension will be further discussed under brothel and destiny (Chapters 7 and 8), the bitterness with which the Devadasi expresses these words indicates her hatred for her parents who had dedicated her. I did get a doctor after much difficulty to this Devadasi. It took a long time to get a doctor to this distant lonely dry desert-like spot. It was hidden amidst hills. It was dusk when we arrived. There was no electricity. In the village only one lantern was available. Muniamma and a few others were examined and treated. The doctor stated that venereal diseases and tuberculosis were prevalent. Just before leaving the villagers gathered in front of Muniamma's house. They all belonged to the Scheduled Castes. One of the elderly men among them came forward, spread a mat before us on the hard ground, and as a mark of gratitude prostrated before us on behalf of the villagers. Although it is their right that they be cared for, being a neglected people in society their gratitude was immense, and on our part not deserved. But, while returning our jeep was followed by a sturdy Upper Caste young man of the area who had control over the villagers. His automobile went up and down, around our jeep. The three of us (the doctor, the driver and myself) in the dark lonely area never spoke. I implored God's help and protection, especially for the safety of the lady doctor and the driver who had come in response to my request.

These local 'leaders', mostly from the Upper Caste/Class have a hold on this group of people for generations. The women and girls work for them from dawn to dusk and have to cook their gruel and attend to the needs of the members of the family with very little time and money left for their health care. Publicity was given to the existing situation, there were talks at a gathering of hospital administrators of India, on the need for outreach. Mobile programmes for patients who are unable to reach distant health centres was emphasized as

necessary. The need for voluntary organizations to work in close co-ordination with that community in an integral development programme was suggested.

5.2 TRADITIONAL PROSTITUTION: SINGING AND DANCING GIRLS, CABARET ARTISTS

The classification of prostitutes as Kumbhadasi, Rupjivas and Ganika was discussed in Chapter 4. Under Rupjivas, a group of prostitutes who lived by dancing, music and acting on the stage, were known as 'Nati'. Crooke (1975:56) clarifies 'Natt' (Sanskrit nata or 'dancer') 'a tribe so called, gypsy dancers, acrobats and prostitutes who are found scattered all over north-western provinces and Oudh'. He describes the Gandharb, Gandhava caste of singers and prostitutes as found in small groups in Benaras, Allahabad and Ghazipur (pp. 379-81) as follows:

Beautiful girls or those who show from their childhood a taste for music are selected for prostitution and not allowed to marry in the caste. A meeting of the brotherhood is held before the girl attains maturity, and it is settled that she is to be allowed to have intercourse with none but a high caste Hindu. If she does not abide by this rule, she is at once expelled from the caste. When the matter is thus settled, some sweets are distributed and she is formally declared to be a prostitute. The first man who engages her services is regarded as her quasi-husband. On such an occasion all the ordinary ceremonies of a Hindu marriage are performed at the house of the girl, except the walking round the fire (Phera). The prostitute girls are never allowed to marry.

As marriage is a socially accepted form within which sexual relations are approved, the form of 'marriage' is adopted in the recruitment process for various forms of prostitution in India. The 'marriage' of the girl is announced. Persons concerned are invited. The girl is dressed as a bride. Celebrations surround the event of the day. Rituals are performed, but a few important rituals that characterize the actual marriage are omitted. But to all appearances, in the case of the singing and dancing girl, it appears to be the actual marriage.

5.2.1 Trained in singing and dancing

The system of traditional singing and dancing girls has some similarities and differences with the previous system of 'sacred' prostitutes. Both the Devadasis and the traditional singing and dancing girls perform dances and sing. However, the Devadasis do so in the temples, the traditional singing and dancing girls generally do so in houses (kothas, now in hotels, etc.) where they are invited or visited by clients and observers. While the 'sacred' prostitutes present this art in a religious context, the traditional singing and dancing girls present it as an entertainment, of skill, beauty and rhythm. Some of the dancing girls present mujras or symbols, generally depicted by hands, with the accompaniment of music, which have sexual connotations. Surinder Awasti (*Caravan*, April 1st, 1983) states that many of these prostitutes catered to the needs of the noble men and these men held singing and dancing in high esteem. For instance, in 19th century Delhi, licensed prostitutes lived in two red light areas, one in Chawri Bazaar where many prominent singers and dancers of the day also lived and the other in Kath Bazaar, which was primarily a place for the sale of sex without singing or dancing.

5.2.2 Recruitment of the child made by kith and kin

However, the major commonality between these two classifications of prostitution is the fact that both are carried out by the children's own kith and kin (parents and guardians). While the person who is expected to lead a prostitute's life is just a child, she is recruited for prostitution by adults. The decision to be a prostitute is not her own. Thousands of children recruited in this way are forced to carry on prostitution in India. Fear is instilled in the dedicated girls of the wrath of God (to whom she is married) if she fails to carry on prostitution, and the traditional dancing girl's commitment to her 'quasi-husband' and what follows forces these girls to continue prostitution.

One of the implications faced by the prostitutes of both these classifications is that they cannot marry and have a normal life. Neither will their female children be acceptable for marriage by Indian men. Male children born to the prostitutes of these two categories generally get married and set up a home. Thus, gender and sexuality are inter-linked with the dual institutions of marriage and prostitution. Once a girl is made a prostitute, her daughters as well as her daughters' daughters come to experience the same stigma. Often the daughter is absorbed into the same form of prostitution. Not only are these prostitutes looked down upon as belonging to a 'prostitute caste' (although this does not come under the Indian caste system) but they are subjected to various forms of oppression.

5.2.3 For the Upper Castes alone

For instance, in the traditional singing and dancing girls system, the men settle that she has intercourse only with men of the Upper Caste, failing which she will be expelled from the caste. Another condition they place before her is that she cannot get married. Thus we find today communities of singing and dancing girls who generally come from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, denied the opportunity to get married. Children born to these Upper Caste men are considered as 'illegitimate' as they were born out of wedlock. They are not given the caste of the man responsible for the conception. In fact, Gandhi gave them the name 'Harijan' or 'Children of God'. However, this term was not accepted, as it referred to children born out of wedlock (or termed as 'bastard').

An analysis of the situation indicates that these systems are beneficial to males and not to females. These women and girls are used through these systems for the benefit of men, and as the above situation indicates on the base of caste, for the benefit of the Upper Castes alone. This situation raises the question: Are prostitutes used by the Upper Caste men alone in India? This question will be better understood in the next chapter which deals with patrons of prostitution, and what happens to these women and girls once they become

'throw-away girls', and so will be discussed a little later. With regard to the Scheduled Caste men, these men generally marry Scheduled Caste women and girls. However, they do not get involved in false marriages which result in the sexual exploitation of their Scheduled Caste women and girls.

5.2.4 In the context of marriage

The above accounts presented the fact that marriage ceremonies are adopted at the recruitment or initiation stage but are not real marriages but false ones. For instance, in the Hindu marriage rite, walking round the fire (Phera), an important part of wedding ceremonies, is omitted. I have observed at Hindu weddings that the tip of the clothes worn by the bride and the groom are tied while the husband leads the wife around the sacred fire, the bride following him faithfully behind. This important sign of monogamy, of their oneness, and the sacredness of marriage, performed in the presence of sacred fire is omitted in the initiation ceremony of the singing and dancing girls. Likewise, in 'sacred' prostitution marriage with the deity is performed. Here, there is no quasi-husband as among the singing and dancing girls, but a sword is used at the time of the marriage to represent the groom (the god or goddess to whom they are dedicated). Marriage acceptable in Indian culture is utilized at initiation ceremonies in both forms of prostitution. This mystifies the exploitative dimension (violence) extended to women and girls through prostitution and legitimizes the institution. Almost all the girls included in this system come from the cultural background known as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

5.2.5 For the benefit of Upper Caste men/nobles, the rich

One of the leaders of the singing and dancing girls who resides in Chawri Bazaar states in an interview (cited in *Caravan*, April 1st, 1983, p. 23) that her grandmother and her aunt had a 'kotha' (the place where they functioned as traditional singers and dancers).

Today, apart from G.B. Road (Delhi's red light area), her troupe of four or five girls give performances in big hotels and agricultural farms on the outskirts of Delhi. She laments that the 'profession' is not as lucrative as it used to be in the 'good old days' when the rich patronized it. She started learning fine arts as a child. She asks about the women of aristocratic families who give performances, appear on TV, film actresses who indulge in the worst sort of body exhibition thus offending good taste. Yet these women are hailed as great artistes.

The above leader of the singing and dancing girls emphasizes 'good taste' in the art of dancing, and does not bring in the moral aspect of prostitution. She points to other women, for example of aristocratic families and in the film industry as indulging in worse sort of body exhibition and points to the offending of good taste. The two dimensions under discussion are: one of art (singing and dancing) and the other relating to the body (morality). In regard to these aspects, at least at the level of ideology, people generally place value on good taste in singing and dancing as well as in good morality. This was evident a couple of centuries ago, when singing and dancing was dissociated from prostitution and made into an art: a subject for the school curriculum and in the homes of the Upper Castes. Learning this art was considered as an accomplishment. Children began at a young age, about six years, and they perfected their art by the time they were teenagers. At the close of the training in this art a public performance was arranged for special invitees and the girl gave a performance on the stage. The programme of dance also served to invite proposals for the girl's marriage.

However, prior to this dissociation of dance and prostitution in India, the art of singing and dancing was associated with prostitute 'caste' or group. The performance in former times was generally given by the person who was involved in prostitution. However, today these arts are not associated with prostitution, and the performer need not be a prostitute. With regard to the nature of body exhibition pointed out before, whether music

or dance in films in India, pure classics are seldom adopted. The objective of the film world is to make profit. Whatever sensational songs or dances, or manner of dressing that could bring in more profit forms part of the trade. The ideal is that whether in traditional dancing or in the film world, modesty and decorum need to be valued and maintained.

Besides, deterioration in the art itself can be seen in today's cabaret as well. Young girls are initiated and exploited in the name of Indian cabaret. Many Low Castes and Scheduled Castes become victims of this racket. The situation created by the organizers is such that the girls generally give in, or are forced into prostitution. Sujatha, a young teenager from South India relates her experience as a dancing girl (Indian cabaret artist):

Case history 7

I am from Tamil Nadu. I was brought up by my aunt. Since my aunt has no children she adopted me. I was going to school. But this year my aunt told me not to go to school since I am a big girl now. One day a dance master spoke to my aunt. He offered to teach me dancing since I am doing nothing at home. As there are several girls in our locality who learn singing and dancing at home, my aunt agreed. Besides, the master very kindly agreed to teach me free of charge. He came to our house whenever he had time. In four months he taught me a folk dance, a light (lamp) dance, a snake dance, and a disco dance. He told my aunt that there was an opportunity to give a public performance for me in Delhi. All the expenses would be met by the organizers. I might get a chance of seeing several big cities too. Besides, cash will be paid for my dancing at the end of the programme (i.e., after touring several cities). On hearing this we agreed to this plan. Some new clothes were stitched by the organizers and on the appointed day the teacher sent a man (as stated earlier) to take me as he would not accompany me to Delhi.

Sujatha was interviewed by me after her arrest in 1986 from an eros centre in one of the metropolitan cities of India. She was in the company of five other 'cabaret artists', all arrested at the same time. Generally arrests were made for indecent dressing and dancing, etc. While the actual procedure of initiation and exploitation in this system will be included under 'Initiation' in Chapter 6, at this point the following observations on this situation are discussed.

Sujatha's aunt was a single woman. Chapter 3 illustrated the situation of single women in India. Women's marginalization increases if they are unmarried. Sujatha's aunt had been married, but had no issue. Married women without issue are considered as a 'barren tree' and looked down upon by society as having failed in their role by not providing a child. She is perceived as having failed in her duty towards her husband as well as the expectation of society. Sujatha's aunt was then widowed. She was a bad omen and her entering other houses was considered as bringing some misfortune and so was not entertained. Her life was confined to her home. In her experience of loneliness and segregation by society, Sujatha's adoption seems to have given her some joy and company. Her qualities of nurturing a child and her unfulfilled desires of bringing up children must have had scope when Sujatha was adopted. However, as soon as Sujatha grew up she began to be afraid that she might be raped by some one. She asked her to discontinue her studies. When the dance master offered to teach Sujatha dance without payment she might have thought that it was a good opportunity to keep her occupied. As several parents in South India value classical dancing and spend a lot of money to teach this skill to their children, she must have been happy that she had the privilege of getting Sujatha trained as a professional dancer, an accomplishment only the very rich could afford.

Sujatha and her aunt were ignorant of many things. For instance, the exact nature of the teacher who offered to teach the dance. Although teachers are given great respect as gurus in Indian society, this teacher must have further commanded respect as not all teachers were capable of imparting dance, a rare art in India. The gratitude for the favour extended to a widow, the concession of fee made for Sujatha, all must have made her trust him and believe his words. She who was so particular about safeguarding the virtue of Sujatha that she had stopped her from attending school, must have not suspected the deceptive plan the teacher was engaged in at all.

Besides, single women who struggle to maintain their good reputation, when incidents such as Sujatha's case occur in the family are less inclined to give it publicity as it weakens their reputation. Some do not give publicity for they feel that society will blame them. This would include Sujatha's natural parents. Sujatha is a Scheduled Caste girl. Will society listen to her plight?

In recruiting girls for prostitution, choice of particular girls forms an important element. In a society such as India, where virginity is valued and generally all brides are virgins, a virgin is protected as of great value. In the prostitution world, a virgin is in great demand as she is considered as free from venereal diseases. Sexual relations with virgins is also misconceived to be a curative measure for those affected with venereal diseases. Sujatha, who had just grown up would be in demand. To traffickers she could bring in a large amount. There are special reception centres for deflowering a virgin, as well as regular brothels and hotel settings used by many. I have visited three such reception centres. For the interior of a 'reception centre' see diagram 2 (Appendix VI).

The organizers are aware of these factors in planning strategy for recruitment of girls as Indian cabaret artistes. How are Scheduled Caste women, especially girls such as Sujatha, perceived in Indian society? What is their experience as human beings? What is the response of the Scheduled Castes? One of the ways in which the Scheduled Castes respond to the exploitation of their women and girls is to write poems such as the following :

'The Revenge' by Baburao Bagul

She was returning from the market carrying on her head some flour from the mill. For seven days, there had been no sign of Gangoo and it was Janaki who had to look after Raghoo and Ghandoo. She rose early in the morning and cut grass in ten different places, bundled it together and sold it in the market. Then she purchased some flour, some salt and a few other things for cooking a meal. And now she was on her way home.

As she entered the lane, she suddenly faced the whole gang of them. Those were the bums who regularly made passes at her, accosted her, stopped her with

force, pawed her breasts, embraced her with lewd gestures. She froze and turned back as she saw her. They followed her.

‘Seems she’s loaded today.’

‘Hey Janski will you give it to us?’

‘... The bird is real cute. Feel like gathering her right here.’

‘Lay her then.’

‘What will the public say?’

‘As if she comes from a virtuous family? After all, she is the daughter of a muruli (a Scheduled Caste). Who’s going to listen to her?’

Janaki was listening. Her head began to reel with fear, anger and disgust ... But just then a lot of them fell upon her ...

Her face was still wet with sweat.

She was still stunned and dazed. She walked onto the road trying to balance herself with effort. She tried to bear the pain of her crushed lips, bitten cheeks, bruised breasts. When she entered her own locality, she burst into sobs.

(*Times Weekly*, Bombay, November 25, 1973, Special Issue on Dalit Literature)

The atrocities committed against the Scheduled Castes are on the increase. The following table indicates their increase between 1977 and 1978:

Table 6

Atrocities against Untouchables 1977-1978

Category of atrocities	Crime reported during 1977	1978	% of increase
Murder	334	456	36.52
Violence	1,341	1,570	17.20
Rape	332	541	66.87
Arson	716	1,202	67.88
Other offences	8,156	11,284	38.35
Total	10,879	15,053	38.37

The atrocities against the ‘Untouchables’ are classified under various headings under Table 6 totaling 10,879 (1977) and 15,053 (1978) are evidence of violence committed against them and are clear evidence of an increase. However, there is one difference: the ‘Untouchables’ are awakening to the contradictions that exist in their lives of oppression as evident from the poem cited above.

The above Table 6 (*source*: Massey, 1994:166) indicates the reported incidents of atrocities as a serious matter indeed for people in Indian society generally do not report these incidents. Thus what is reported is an indicator or the tip of an iceberg of the real situation. As stated in relation to Sujatha's case history, the aunt and the girl herself would not like their experience known to others. Most of the victims of these atrocities go through life coping with their own lives and difficulties in silence. There is an inclination among the public to consider the Scheduled Castes as immoral people. This chapter indicates that the women and girls of the Scheduled Castes, most of whom are illiterate and in rural India, are exploited, have very little chance of protecting themselves from sexual exploiters. Some women and girls I encounter in my daily work have neither safety nor protection from intruders. Some of their huts have no doors. They are exploited on the road, in the farm, under the landlord where they work, etc., and through various systems that exist in Indian society, such as 'sacred' prostitution and 'traditional singing and dancing girls' form of prostitution.

Despite the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989, atrocities such as kidnapping, sale, resale, auction of women and girls for prostitution take place in today's India (see Rita Rozario, 1988). P.D. Mathew (1992:1) rightly points out that 'Many social legislations have been enacted for the welfare of these people but they are not properly implemented. Loopholes in these laws have been used by the offenders of law to escape from punishments. (See chapter 3 in relation to PITA 1986). Consequently victims of atrocities live in anxiety and fear.' I agree that India has a body of good legislation. Some of this focuses on women and children, the Scheduled Castes and prostitution. However, proper implementation of these laws is not carried out. The law related to prostitution, for instance, penalizes prostitutes under certain clauses for violation, but has no clauses or punishment for clients. They can function freely, inflict violence on

prostitutes in various forms but the law cannot touch them. Law regarding traffickers will be discussed shortly.

5.3 CONTEMPORARY PROSTITUTION

As 'sacred' prostitution and 'Traditional' singing and dancing girls forms of prostitution that exists today are placed under the classification of one and two categories, all the other forms of prostitution in India today are classified under the third category "contemporary prostitution". For example, prostitution in red light areas, hotels, lodges, road side, near railway and bus stations, prostitution in highways, virility tests, call girls, escort girls, sales girls, blue films and prostitution, maiden girls, 'floating' girls, camp prostitution, dark world prostitution, free sex, concubinage, sale of liquor cum prostitution, massage parlour girls, 'marriages' and mistresses, mass marriage and desertion, 'coaching classes in driving cars', etc. Each of these forms of prostitution have their own strategies of recruitment for prostitution. Prostitution in red light areas is discussed below, highlighting culture and violence in the lives of prostitutes in India.

5.3.1 Prostitution in red light areas

The establishment of 75 state licensed harlotry during the British Period (Ballhatchet, 1980) was discussed earlier in Chapter 4. It was also pointed out that at the time of the coming of the Moghuls and the British, prostitution already existed in various forms in India, and continued to exist even after the Moghul and the British Periods. The following account provides some information on prostitution in Bombay's Grant Road.

According to the Reports of the Commissioner of Police, Bombay, and of the Committee set up for the study of prostitution in Bombay (1921 and 1922), a letter dated 29 March 1921 from the President, Bombay Municipality to the Secretary of Government

indicates the creation of Grant Road red light area at the request of the public, the local people:

A segregated area for the women in prostitution was formed near the vicinity of Grant Road Station. The segregation has been progressively attained largely by compliance with demands continually arising for the removal of prostitutes from 'respectable' localities. Prostitutes have been transported to an area where they can be a nuisance only to each other.

The above quotations indicate that the segregation of prostitutes in red light areas had their origin from the public. A similar request by Sir Balachandra Krishna as early as 1911 for the removal of prostitutes from Girguam is mentioned in the history of prostitution in Bombay as well.

Besides, factors such as the influx of Pathans (who were forced to leave their cold mountainous terrain of North West Frontier Province due to poverty) in the 1920s to Bombay; the arrival of the Muslim immigrants from Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan in Bombay due to high level unemployment from 1947; the involvement of some Upper Caste men from the South (Tamil Nadu) are some of the reasons that gave rise, by the 1970s, to a network of underworld activities such as smuggling and drug trafficking, the control of hootch trade and transport, etc. which made Bombay a centre of activities, within which prostitution continued to increase.

5.3.2 Clandestine prostitution

The Department of Statistics, India, in relation to Public Health for 1921 states 'Dr Mistry gives a moderate estimate of Clandestine prostitution of this period as 30,000 to 40,000.' Thus we find that India had clandestine prostitution at the beginning of the twentieth century. However, the types of clandestine prostitution were not clearly specified. Even in relation to brothel areas, these existed prior to the coming of the British (as pointed out earlier). The areas created by the British were called lal bazaar, etc. However, the letter dated 29 March 1921 (mentioned above) provided information that the Indians were

responsible for the creation of brothel areas segregated from other people for prostitution. This form of prostitution was associated with economy and is referred to as 'commercial' prostitution. While economic factors may play a significant role in other countries, the association of prostitution with economy alone is to omit the significant role culture plays in the maintenance of prostitution in India. To focus on one or other form of prostitution and omit all other forms of prostitution is to contribute to the increase of prostitution in India. The following discussion focuses on recruitment under the third classification 'contemporary' prostitution.

5.3.3 The role of caste in recruitment

The concept of recruitment indicates a process of selection, enlisting or enrolling persons for certain specific function(s). The suitability of the person in relation to the function(s) to be carried out is generally related to the demand, such qualities as age, cultural background. For instance, Margot Hornblower ('The Skin Trade', Paris, *Times*, June 21, 1993) reports that the skin trade network investigated in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany lured 3,000 women from Latin America and Asia as well as Eastern Europe into prostitution in Western Europe as cabaret artistes between 1985 and 1991. Nigerian streetwalkers flooded into Bologna while Antwerp's red light districts are filled with Ghanaians. In modern Italy, last autumn, police rounded up more than 100 women from Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and points east. Police say a quarter of German's 200,000 prostitutes are now from the former Eastern bloc. Bars in major Chinese cities now offer blond, blue-eyed Russian 'hostesses'. Thus the report indicates women and girls are not taken at random, but selected from particular countries to meet the local demands.

Although formerly prostitution and prostitute were perceived as the same, now the involvement of third parties is recognized, as legislation in this regard indicates. Nevertheless, the role of the caste system and violence in contemporary prostitution has not

been explored. The popular notion based on observation assumes prostitution in India as a phenomenon of the poor, for economic reasons. Since caste is associated with class in India (as the Scheduled Castes are also the economically poor) the institution of prostitution is also referred to as a phenomenon of the Scheduled Castes. It is assumed, even by learned persons in India, that the Upper Caste women are not involved in prostitution. However, this study indicates that 69 out of 125 respondents interviewed in Bombay (55.2%) were Scheduled Castes, 29 (or 23.2%) were Upper Castes, and 27 (or 21.6%) belong to groups to whom caste is not applicable. The following discussion focuses on the modes of recruitment. Thus while the Scheduled Castes outnumbered the others, as was expected, it is a significant finding of this study to discover that 23.2% of the respondents belonged to the Upper Castes. Through this finding some of the vital role caste plays in the institution of prostitution in India emerged. The following account provides details of how these people are recruited for prostitution.

5.3.4 Trafficking and the trafficked

Trafficking in women and girls consists of transport, sale and purchase of people (men, women, boys, girls, transvestites and transsexuals) for the purpose of contemporary prostitution. It is a strategy or mode of recruitment, adopted by traffickers to enrol, enlist, or incorporate persons in prostitution. As is evident in the life histories of prostitutes in India, it includes aspects such as sustained coercion, inflicting violence or force through use of sharp implements such as knives, use of ropes and whips, drugs and herbal drinks, torture and/or branding, with the aim of attaining submission. This procedure adopted by traffickers to attain submission is referred to as 'breaking the will' or 'teaching them a lesson'. It incorporates modes from high-speed transportation to other conventional forms such as the transport of kidnapped persons in gunny bags. In lonely mountainous and ravine areas the trafficked people are directed to go to required places at gun point. The institution has its

own protection squad with contract killers and men with guns and swords. At the same time there are those who pose as truly concerned, as benefactors to deceive women and girls, or those who appear in the form of gangs and masked men. While these modes of recruitment may take place elsewhere as well, how does the mode of recruitment in contemporary prostitution in India differ from other countries? Or rather, what is specific to India in relation to caste, culture and violence in the life histories of prostitutes in relation to recruitment?

5.3.5 Qualities of an ideal wife: expectations challenged

The Puranas state the qualities of an ideal wife. Garuda (108) among other qualities of an ideal wife, mentions: '... and [an ideal wife] is ever ready to yield to the procreative desires of her lord, is not a man, but the lord of heaven.' This dimension, though worded in various ways, forms part of some of the other religions that expect wives to obey their husbands in all things. However, in the following case history Fatima presents her experience of culture and violence encountered in her recruitment as a result of an earlier experience of culture and violence caused by her husband, and challenges the expectation of husbands in society on matters of procreation.

Case history 8

I come from South India, I got married when I was an adolescent. I have a teenage son. Now I am 30 years old. After marriage I was happy with my husband. My husband was happy when I gave birth to a son. We brought him up with joy. However, my husband's love for me began to change gradually. He began to ill-treat me. He wanted many children. I could not provide him with more children. By now, I had lost my father. My husband would not listen to my mother pleading to treat me kindly. One day, due to my husband's violence, I took my son and returned to my parental home. In my parental home, my mother, my mother's brother (my uncle) and my uncle's wife (my aunt) live. They were economically well off. My father has left part of the property for me since I am the oldest child. So my mother, my uncle and aunt could not ask me not to come inside the house. Although they did not like my returning home, they were happy to have my son. There were no other children in the house. Day to day, I began to feel that I was not really accepted by my people.

I thought of taking up a job and being independent with my son. My search for a job was rewarded by a job in a nearby factory. One day, a woman about my age, who worked in the factory, began telling me of job opportunities and high wages in Bombay. I did find my job in the factory heavy and the wage quite low. I thought since my son is well loved by my family I could leave him under their care and take up the new light job in Bombay. I could send money home as well as save some. So when the co-worker in the factory stated that she had resigned and would be leaving, I resigned my job too and after informing my people, I left for Bombay the following day. The woman (co-worker) took me to a relative's house on arrival in Bombay. Once inside the house, I was welcomed. But, soon I came to know that the co-worker had deceived me. It was impossible for me to get out of this brothel. [After a long silence, in anger, she asks] What a life? Horrible! I have been treated for venereal diseases. My health is ruined. I who stood for monogamy had to be forced into a life like this? My husband has married again! Society also encourages - as soon as one wife leaves the man gets another. See my state! Can I produce more children by willing? Am I a machine? Religion says husbands are lords. Are they lords? And are we to obey these lords!

Marital disharmony is the reason most frequently given (20%) in the sample of study in Bombay as the cause of women and girls leaving their homes in search of jobs. The causes of marital breakdown are many. The range includes: deceiving the wife shortly after marriage by exposing a marriage that was contracted earlier; involving in child-marriage and rejecting the wife after puberty -- the reason given is need for a servant not a wife; contracting marriage for income or for a 'bread winner', not someone to be taken care of; a wife who would tolerate her husband's polygamous behaviour was wanted; a wife who would permit sexual relations with other women in his own house was expected. Arranged marriage by parents to maternal uncles or to older men in keeping with customs and social status has led some women to encounter difficulties in relationships due to a wide age gap. Respondents who had to leave their husband's home or were sent away for the above reasons were in financial stress for their livelihood. In their search for jobs they came across people who posed as benefactors, but used them as recruits for prostitution for their gain.

Cultural factors, such as the protected lives of Upper Caste/Class women and girls leading to dependency on others has led to some coming in contact with traffickers as well, once alone and out of the house. The lives of Scheduled Caste married women indicates that their life before and after marriage continues to be a stress and strain in day-to-day life.

However, the present day girls (those trafficked for prostitution) are no longer prepared to conform to the unjust demands and to the polygamous life of their husbands. They attribute their recruitment to prostitution first and foremost to their husband's ill-treatment in the name of culture and its traditions. They consider deception by traffickers subjecting them to prostitution as a great injustice done to them.

5.3.6 The traffickers and the trafficked

It was a woman, a co-worker in the factory, who motivated Fatima to come to Bombay to work. People often assume that traffickers who involve in recruiting people for prostitution belong to big gangs that function in highway belts in India. In fact, my interviews with four child-stealers, and descriptions of traffickers given by other respondents, has indicated that the institution of prostitution meticulously plans its strategies of recruitment in keeping with the particular type of people that are in demand or to be trafficked. Those who steal babies are generally adolescent girls who are very charming in their manners, educated and paid by groups or organizations for whom they function. A woman involved in the kidnap of a teenager at the time of a festival could be strong and sturdy with a tribal background. In Fatima's case it was a woman from the factory. A Muslim girl is often trafficked, if by deception, by another Muslim woman, as culturally a Muslim girl will accompany another Muslim woman. In the case of Karuna an escort was sent to bring her to her 'office'. In the case of a 9 year old, it was a couple who came with an urgent message to say that her uncle was dying and wanted to see her. She had to leave school at once. Suguna was lifted into a lorry driven by four masked men.

Suguna, a 15 year old Scheduled Caste girl relates her recruitment process:

I come from rural India. I have a father, mother, an elder sister and a younger brother. My father had a piece of land and cultivated it. The income was sufficient for us. But my uncle interfered with our land by producing false documents. My father lost his land. He began working on daily wages on others' land. But the work was seasonal and the income was low. Proposals for my elder sister came. Her marriage had to be performed. This entailed a lot of expense. Whatever valuables there were in the house had to be sold or given away as dowry. Besides money had to be borrowed. Our life after my sister's marriage was difficult. The meagre income went to the creditors who pestered at our doorstep. We had to give away what was earned and starve. My little brother would cry because of hunger. I began going from door to door to beg for food.

In one of the homes a young man began talking to me. He said 'Why should you beg for your food when you could easily take up a job and eat with dignity. There is so much demand for servants in the city where I stay. If you want a job, you can join me at the bus stand this evening. I can pay for your ticket to my city and settle a job for you.

I thought that if I asked my father he might not permit me to go. How long could I see my brother cry? If I worked for some time, collected some money and returned, I could keep a small shop. I could sell rice and dhal. We could get some profit, and have daily food as well. So without telling my people I walked all the way to the bus stand. The young man was there. He paid for my ticket and we reached his city. In his house there were three rooms for the ladies. There were two ladies in two rooms. I was given one room. That evening I was called by the young man to his room that was full of books. I came to know that he was a lawyer.

That day and several days that followed, he raped me. There was no way of escape from his clutches. I refused to eat, I insisted that he send me for a job. After a few days he told me that a person would take me for a job. I was given a small box with some clothes when an old man came in to take me. I was left with the old man who brought me to a brothel where I have been trading all these months. Look at my skin. My whole body is scratching! I think it is the food.

I called a doctor with the permission of the institution where I interviewed her. The doctor stated that she had venereal disease.

Like Suguna most of the life-histories of prostitutes indicate a search for better jobs and steady income. The data indicates that the next highest group (18.4% of the sample) comprises women and girls who have left their homes from rural areas for steady jobs and better income. This group comprises mainly Scheduled Castes. In their search for work, they are deceived and forced into prostitution. Due to factors such as their low socio-economic status they often become vulnerable to ill-treatment and violence. Their trust in others (such as a lawyer in the case of Kanamma) draws them into further difficult

situations. A Scheduled Caste girl being trafficked is seldom detected, as if she is in the company of an Upper Caste man or woman she is considered as a servant, and if in the company of an old man (in situations such as Kanamma) it is often assumed by the public that the old man is a 'benefactor' or 'welfare worker' who is finding a job placement for her.

Thus, traffickers are aware of the cultural factors in the Indian situation in recruiting women and girls for prostitution. The following case history of Sridevi, an Upper Caste college student and her mode of recruitment into prostitution is presented below.

Case history 10

I am from Andhra Pradesh. I encountered financial problems when I was in college. My family was unable to extend help. So I decided that I should take up a job, when I met a friend. He suggested that I go to a particular politician who would be sure to provide a job for me. I did go to this politician. He was happy to hear that I came from the Brahmin community. He promised to get me a job soon with accommodation. I informed my family of this job opportunity and shifted to my new accommodation provided for me.

As I waited for my new work, I received a phone call from the politician one day. He wanted to know if I had seen a particular hill station. He hoped to visit this place at the weekend. If I had not seen this place and wished to do so I would be most welcome. As I had no work, and everything (food etc.) was provided by the politician, I told him that I had not seen this place and would be happy to visit this hill station. The car arrived at my door in the weekend and after a long drive we reached the top of the hill. The scenery was beautiful, the accommodation and facilities for food well arranged. After rest, food and sight-seeing it was time to return. But the politician was not ready to leave. A little later I was raped and my job was explained to me. A prostitute?

There was no going back home for me. I had neither a job nor income to survive. I did not know what to do. The politician inquired about my health and stated that I need not worry about the future as I would have plenty of money for he would send a friend, a wealthy man, to help me out. Thus, friends began to come...

Sridevi, when she came to me for assistance was in emotional and psychological crisis. Her involvement in prostitution has resulted in her dependency on alcohol and smoking as well, for she was expected to act thus as an escort girl in the company of Upper Caste/Class clients. Although economically stable, she required immediate psychiatric services.

5.4 CULTURE AND VIOLENCE IN THE LIFE-HISTORIES OF PROSTITUTES:

RECRUITMENT

One of the insights that come through in the above case histories is the fact that the recruitment process is so subtle that the women and girls concerned were unaware of it until they were faced with dire consequences such as being thrust into a brothel or being raped. This is contrary to the impression people generally have about prostitutes' entry into prostitution. One of the reasons for inability to discern that the person who offers help is a trafficker is his and/or her befriending ways. For a woman or girl who has experienced bitterness, pseudo-love in society, has been beaten up, cheated, ignored, oppressed or exploited, to meet a befriending person is to place their trust in them. To some it could be an escape from a difficult situation to another situation (a change, a hope for better conditions). To many a sheltered girl who has been brought up in dependency to the father, brother, husband or mother, etc., it is a continuation of dependency on the person who leads her. The experience of being all alone, the helplessness of most of them who lose their way or have nothing on hand, the emotionally disturbed and those worried about the past and/or of the unknown, the inability to understand what is actually happening to them, often makes them remain silent. They simply leave the other to lead and just follow the leader. At times the leader is their own father, uncle, neighbour, etc.

It is often assumed by the public that entry into prostitution is voluntary and for economic reasons. People responsible for the entry of prostitutes, as stated by the prostitutes in the two studies conducted by me are as follows:

Table 7**Persons responsible for entry into prostitution**

Persons responsible for entry into prostitution	India		Bombay	
	No.	%	No.	%
Traffickers	455	41.4	92	73.6
Kith and kin	353	32.1	3	2.4
Not applicable because of declared non-involvement in prostitution	-	-	2	1.6
Self (escaped from brothel, returned home, not accepted back, nowhere to go)	-	-	1	0.8
Not applicable	292	26.5	27	21.6
Total	1100	100.0	125	100.0

The above statistics of the four-year study (1983-86) focus on India (at national level), which is basically rural. As such 'sacred' prostitution and 'traditional' forms of prostitution co-exist with trafficking that takes place generally at rural festivals and fairs. Thus 41.4% trafficking and 32.1% involvement in recruitment for prostitution is evident. However, in urban prostitution (Bombay) the analysis of persons involved in entry indicates 73.6% trafficking and involvement of kith and kin as low as 2.1%

Thus contemporary prostitution in India, both at rural and urban level, involves high trafficking levels and involvement of kith and kin. This is contrary to the opinion the public generally holds (i.e. that prostitutes enter prostitution voluntarily due to poverty). Although 29 respondents (23.2%) of the sample of study conducted in Bombay come from Upper Castes, 69 (55.2%) come from Scheduled Castes and 27 (21.6%) from caste not applicable groups, such as the Nepalis and Bangladeshis, the inclination to perceive all prostitutes as coming from the Scheduled Caste community also exists.

At the time of interview two respondents sent for interview from two separate institutions declared their non-involvement in prostitution. The reason given by one of them (a young widow) is of false accusation by her brother-in-law for rejecting his advances. The second incident is of a young teenager whom a man had promised to marry, but was left on

the street when he disappeared. She felt stranded and was arrested. One of the respondents that returned to the brothel was not accepted back home. Brothels welcome the 'rejects' of society. They become targets of traffickers' gain. This aspect will be discussed in Chapters 7 and 8.

5.5 IMPACT OF RECRUITMENT ON PROSTITUTES

An analysis of the circumstances that made the women and girls leave their home castewise indicated that among the Upper Castes it was cultural factors, and in relation to the Scheduled Castes both cultural and economic factors. Some of them had experienced the betrayal of love from their own people, there were others who had known deprivation almost to the point of death. The befriending ways of persons who promised assistance or accompanied them did not raise any suspicion in the mind of the respondents. There were women and girls who were in a good relationship with their family but were suddenly snatched away from their loved ones, even taken away from their infants by strangers. These strangers, they soon realized, were traffickers.

However, there were a few adolescent girls (from Upper Castes) who were at home with regard to their involvement in prostitution. An examination of the situation of a Brahmin girl indicated that the girl, who was from West Bengal, and from a family where prostitution is carried on and she was conditioned to be a prostitute from childhood. Another adolescent girl from South India, did escape from the clutches of traffickers and went home. As she was not accepted by her people she had to return to the brothel. She states that she had nowhere to go.

Most of the women and girls had spent their lives in their home and village or town. The majority of them had not heard of prostitution. Their ignorance of the life situation outside their home or town made them easy prey to traffickers. Their situation of being

alone in the world, penniless, often illiterate, made them remain with those who escorted them. However, most of them were victims of recruitment (see Table 7). Prostitution as an occupation was not their choice. Often, as the 'sacred' and the 'traditional singing and dancing girls' prostitutes indicate, the children hardly realize that they have been recruited for prostitution. Prostitution in these situations is not voluntary choice as an occupation, and they do not function independently as often assumed, especially by those who stand for prostitution.

Whatever reasons made the respondents leave their home, it is clear that they were unable to get in touch with people or organizations who could have assisted in their attainment of legitimate goals. This void in society further deepens their trauma. Society often insists that conformity to culture is essential, and non-conformity can lead to breaking up of relationships, even leaving home. But once out of the home society refuses to accept them as well. People and organizations who can function as a bridge so that those in need can come through their crisis without getting into further trouble or sinking further into deep waters, are essential, since to the recruiters they are a good 'catch'. And once in their clutches, these women and girls (most of whom are mere children) are shaped (socialized or victimized) to suit the demands of clients. The aspects of socialization and victimization will be taken up in Chapter 6 under 'Initiation'.

5.6 CONCLUSION

Women and girls (respondents) in this chapter (on recruitment) come across as challengers of some of the cultural traditions and practices prevalent in contemporary society. Though young they dare to give up their families to uphold their convictions. For example, to uphold monogamy they do not support polygamy. For thousands of years women and girls have submitted to their husband's sexual excesses with patient endurance.

But today's women and girls realize that tolerance of the husbands' way of life through the ages has crystalized some of the cultural practices that could have been tackled with a different approach. They dare to be different and do not keep up accepted values.

Some of the women and girls of this group seem adventurous and enterprising. They do not want to subject themselves to the existing economic system that dichotomizes paid labour under organized and unorganized sectors, extending privileges to those in the organized sector, but keeping others under the unorganized sector, which results in various subtle means of denying the dues of labourers on humanitarian grounds. Seasonal work and wage disparity often hits the women labourers with damaging consequences on their health, etc. These women and girls courageously set out, despite not knowing what awaits them, with a hope that conditions can be improved with sincere effort. Their driving force could be attributed to their acute experience of deprivation. As the 15 year old Kanamma asks: 'How long could I see my brother cry (of hunger)?' (Case history 9). To me these women appear as explorers who venture to find new alternatives to find solutions to life problems. Their ancestors have endured depravity all their lives. But women and girls of today find that it is tolerance of cultural practices that has encouraged double standards in relation to morality, or economic systems that make the rich richer, and the poor poorer, and that this needs to be addressed and not tolerated.

In their efforts to find new alternatives, they were perceived as potential recruits for prostitution. In a society that accords low status to women and girls, and considers them as properties of men, they are sold as commodities for prostitution. The women and girls who were challengers, adventurers and entrepreneurs soon become helpless victims. In addition to the above natural consequences of leaving home, coming in contact with traffickers, becoming victims of recruitment for prostitution, the following account provides a more systematic explanation of the strategies adopted by the caste people (especially the

Brahmins) in subjugating women and girls which is considered as power or 'sakti' (see Chapter 3), through prostitution.

In the power struggle between the Upper Castes and the Scheduled Castes, certain measures towards tightening (the caste and gender divisions) and integration (of some of the non-Brahmin traditions in the orthodox Hindu religions) were introduced. For instance, the mother goddess cults and fertility worship of the matriarchal culture were incorporated in the patriarchal brahmin ritual. This entailed inclusion of magic, sexual orgies and blood sacrifices, menstruation as symbols of fertility. Childbirth, sexuality and menstruation were considered as polluting in patriarchal religion. Yet the matriarchal culture was absorbed in the form of mother worship in patriarchal Brahmin ritual (see Liddle and Joshi, 1986). How this incorporation of the matriarchal cult of the Scheduled Castes in the patriarchal brahmin ritual took effect under 'sacred' prostitution will be clarified in the next chapter.

In the male dominated Indian society, where sexual subjugation of females is tolerated, and capitalism enables the rich to grow richer, the caste factor further lowers the status of the Scheduled Castes and violence in their lives is overlooked. Chapter 6 is an analysis of culture and violence in the initiation process.

CHAPTER 6

INITIATION

In the previous chapter the subject of recruitment was discussed under three broad classifications, 'sacred', 'traditional singing and dancing girls' and 'contemporary' prostitution. An examination of the life-histories of prostitutes in relation to recruitment under these three classifications indicated strategies such as dedication of girls to gods and goddesses by their kith and kin, training of girls in singing and/or dancing by adults in their communities, fraudulent means, and coercion or kidnapping of women and girls for prostitution by individuals, syndicates and organizations. An assessment of the recruitment process highlighted the impact of culture and violence on the life-histories of prostitutes -- a violation of human rights and social justice.

While the experience of violation of human rights and social justice may be the experience of prostitutes recruited elsewhere, what is specific to prostitutes in India is the role of caste, i.e., the highest number affected by such experience being the 'Untouchables' or the Scheduled Castes (see Chapter 5).

This chapter focuses on the second phase which follows the process of recruitment: the process of initiation. The case of Kanaga, a 'sacred' prostitute (case history 1, Chapter 5) indicates that she was not aware at what age she was dedicated ('recruited'). However, she remembers when she was 'thrust' into prostitution (initiated). It is evident from this that the existence of a span of time between recruitment and initiation into prostitution exists in some forms of prostitution. However, there are others such as those in the red light areas and in highway prostitution (see case history 20 in this chapter) where the recruited are forced into prostitution shortly after their purchase or recruitment with no delay.

In situations where time is available between recruitment and initiation, the women and girls go through a process of training in dance, socialization, and in the case of sacred prostitutes for the onset of puberty. However, in relation to those kidnapped or deceived and sold to brothels, as in the case of highway and red light area prostitution, the brothel-keepers have to purchase the girl from procurers. Often this involves a large sum of money and the brothel-keeper has to borrow. In order to recover this amount, and to cover the interest on it payable to the creditor, the maintenance of the girl, and the brothel-keeper's needs and profit, the girl purchased is forced into prostitution without delay. Women and girls who face this situation undergo great tension at this time. If they refuse to go they are subjected to whipping, cut with knives, burnt with cigarettes, starved, beaten, kicked, drugged, threatened, etc. If this victimization process does not succeed, then brothel-keepers send one or more men to rape her. The following analysis focuses on the initiation process in the life-histories of prostitutes under the three aforementioned classifications of prostitution.

6.1 SACRED PROSTITUTION: INITIATION

A girl is generally dedicated on or before her sixth birthday and initiated into prostitution on reaching puberty. There are exceptional situations when girls are dedicated after completion of six years, as well as of incidents when a girl is initiated before puberty. The following case history is of Hema, a Devadasi in her late twenties who does not remember when she was dedicated:

Case history 11

I was told that my father was very ill and the doctor had suggested to my parents that the only way for his cure was to dedicate me to the goddess. My parents tried their best to cure the disease with medicine, but the medicine that the doctor

prescribed for my father was ineffective. In the end as my father's health began to deteriorate, they had to dedicate me. I did observe as a girl a string tied around my neck with a symbol of a deity. Some of the girls with whom I played in my neighbourhood wore that symbol around their neck as well. I came to know that I was offered to the goddess, a 'Devadasi'. When I was in my pre-pubertal stage I did witness some of my companions (Devadasi girls) who are older than me being married to a god. The girls wore new saris, there was celebration and dinner. However, I came to know what this ceremony [initiation] meant only when it came to my own experience. As soon as I grew up, in keeping with the custom, the kulikalyanam [from kuli or bath and kalyanam or marriage] ceremony was performed as they normally do for all girls. However, for other girls [non-Devadasis] marriage proposals will come and the girl will be married to a man. In my case [in relation to the Devadasis] negotiation for a patron takes place (sometimes an auction known to all our neighbourhood) a patron is selected. In my case, the doctor who had suggested that I be dedicated when my father was very ill had informed my father that he will meet all the expenses of my initiation ceremony. Generally, if an auction is held, the highest bidder becomes the patron.

Thus the suggestion to dedicate the girl came from an Upper Caste doctor. Finding no other alternative for cure, the girl had to be dedicated. Once the girl is dedicated, she cannot marry. At puberty the girl had to be initiated. The ritual included payment to the temple priests.

Among Basavis of Bellary, in South India, for instance, the Devadasis are barred from cohabiting with their own castes. Gollar and Nayak communities cannot cohabit within their own castes. So outside these restrictions, those patrons who lay claim on the girl have to pay Rs.100. The cost of the ceremony will be somewhere between Rs.500 and Rs.800. The Upper Caste men, who are rich, claim the Devadasi girls by meeting the expenses of the initiation ceremony and become patrons. The patrons from high castes, such as landlords, merchants and other men of status consider it a privilege to be invited for such auctions or even to come forward to be the patrons. Some patrons pay for many Devadasi girls and become patrons of many Scheduled Caste girls.

Case history 11 continued

On the day of my initiation, some of the 'sacred' prostitutes in our Harijan colony [area where the 'Untouchables' live] came to our house. I had to anoint myself with oil and take a bath. I had to cover myself, not with clothes, but with

some leaves [generally neem leaves] tied with a string. After this I had to serve food to the Devadasi women who had come. For five Devadasis are to be present at the ritual. Once the meal was over we had to leave for the temple. All the women gathered around me, applied turmeric [yellow powder] on my forehead, placed some tender branches of neem leaves in my mouth and all left for the temple. Some girls were led by a group of drummers while going to the temple. Then all the people on the roads and houses watched the girl being taken to the temple and come to know that she is a Devadasi. However, inviting the drummers for this function depends on the desire of the patron who pays for it. In my situation, I had no drummers. It was so embarrassing to walk with just some leaves on my body. Some Devadasi girls are taken directly to the temple itself for the ritual bath. In the courtyard of the temple lies the 'Jogula Bavi' (well of Jogitis or devadasis). It took place just as in my case at home [i.e. the girls who take a bath in the temple serve food to the Devadasis in the temple courtyard]. Once in the premises of the temple, I was dressed in the sari and blouse given by the patron, and I was led to the interior of the temple.

For the initiation ceremony we had to go in a procession to the place where the rituals take place. All the articles such as the 'thali' or 'mangul sutra' that will be tied around my neck as a symbol of my marriage with the god, as well as other articles such as the coconuts, five glass beads or pearls, flowers, incense etc. and cash for the ritual were handed over to the priest. He then conducted the worship. He gave the arathi [the tray with incense, flowers and the 'thali' and five beads that were blessed] into my hands. Sometimes the priest himself ties the 'thali' around the neck of the Devadasis. In my case, those around me immediately picked up the 'thali' and tied it around my neck. As soon as this was over the procession returned home. On entering the home the five glass beads or pearl beads (one of which some of the married like to wear around their necks so that they might not become widows) were tied around my neck by those around me. The bridegroom is always represented by a sword. Akshata [rice grains] were thrown on me as in any Hindu marriage. But in the case of Devadasis this ceremony completes the ceremony associated with initiation, and bars her from contracting marriage in future and sanctions prostitution.

There are variations in the initiation rituals in the temple, in the amount to be paid to the priest, the number of people that are to be invited for the ceremony, the type of food that is served at the meal, the quality of the sari and blouse (costly or cheap) given to the girl for this initiation ceremony by the patron. Most of the respondents who shared their initiation ceremony with me stated that the saris given to them were ordinary saris and generally a carpet or mat that is used by the poor people for sleeping was given. Whatever cash was given by patrons was all spent on the initiation ritual and function. The girls got only a sari, a blouse, a new carpet or mat to be used at the night with the patron.

Once the guests returned to their homes the patron was introduced. I experienced a sense of loneliness and helplessness as I was alone and with a stranger. I could not resist his physical brutal advances as I was powerless. I was unnerved by the experience. It was explained by the women in the house that the patron had paid for the deflowering but there is no permanent bond that he should come again. He had no hold on me. I could take other clients for my livelihood as the patron need not pay or maintain me. Some patrons do visit them for some period. However, if a client and the patron come at the same time preference has to be given to the patron. Some patrons treat the Devadasi as a 'keep' for some time; there are others who visit them for a longer or a shorter period. My patron (the doctor) visited me sometimes. Occasionally he brought some snacks, but when I was nearing my delivery he stopped coming. As no cash was paid to me I had to always depend on other clients for my livelihood.

In relation to the Devadasi system there are various aspects such as the myths that strengthen the system: the easy access of virgins and a steady flow of girls for the Upper Caste men through this system. In relation to the temple, the economic stability the skills of the dancers and singers accord towards the maintenance of the temple; and the availability of Devadasis for the temple priests if they so desire are some of the factors considered as advantages. The Devadasis are given a 'pedestal status'. However, for culture and violence in their lives further information is available under Chapters 7 and 8. The following discussion focuses on the socio-economic dimension of initiation.

6.1.1 The socio-economic dimension of initiation

Firstly, Hema's life-history (case history 11) indicates that she was dedicated on a doctor's suggestion for the cure of her father, i.e. dedicated for health reasons. Parents and guardians of Devadasis have done so for other reasons, such as matted hair (see Chapter 5) and for reasons such as retardation and white patches on the body. There are vows made for favours from the gods and goddesses for the gift of a child, preferably a male child. The dedication is generally motivated by cultural reasons such as to overcome some social stigma such as barrenness or disability such as health problems.

However, when it comes to initiating the girl the parents do experience a crisis: the fear of the deity being angry with them for not performing the initiation ceremony. The anger or curse of god or goddess is perceived as more painful than whatever the situations that had made them dedicate the girl. This now becomes an economic problem. The initiation requires cash (Rs.100 to Rs.800 in earlier times, now higher). It is almost impossible for a Scheduled Caste man to bear this expense. The wage from his seasonal job in agriculture and daily wages when employed at other times are insufficient. Besides, some of the Upper Caste men who are also from the Upper Class are not only prepared to be the patrons and meet the expenses, but also, as in Hema's case, to suggest the dedication of the girl, and later offer to meet the expenses and be patron.

Thus, the fulfillment of the cultural vow to the deity, although creating a crisis situation for the parents, is seen as averting the wrath of the god or the goddess through the intervention of the Upper Caste/Class man. To the Upper Caste men who have the financial resources deflowering girls at puberty does not mar their 'purity'. If a man happens to be a Brahmin (see Chapter 3) he is purity itself. Nothing can mar or sully his purity. Besides, as Upper Castes, a ritual bath suffices to cleanse the 'impurity' of being associated with the Scheduled Caste women and girls. In fact, in some Upper Caste families 'unrelated' women used to form part of the family. One of my Upper Caste friends from Andhra Pradesh, South India, stated that she could not understand how the 'aunty' was related to her family. Only later she understood her role in the family -- to be available when the wife is 'untouchable' for biological reasons. Having access to women and girls has social sanction and in the family where the man holds power, his life-style often remains unquestioned.

6.1.2 The myth of defloration for cure of venereal diseases (AIDS)

The myth of defloration of virgins (a woman or a girl who has had no sexual relations) and sexual relations with virgins as a preventive measure from contracting or

curing venereal diseases; and the vulnerability of the girl child in today's India, especially of the Scheduled Castes, who are forced into prostitution through the various systems of prostitution are serious matters of concern. Today, this is especially of concern in the light of AIDS, which has no cure. Dr Gilada of the Indian Health Organization, India, reports of 532 people with AIDS virus infection and 25 full-blown cases (*The Times of India*, December 2, 1988).

6.1.3 Initiation from the perspective of the child

Hema's explanation of her first client (case history 11) illustrates a situation of rape. In conditions where one is not free to consent or reject, forced and/or physically and brutally raped, in a situation where the girl (even if not a child but an adult, a woman) cannot alter the situation or leave, can be stated as a situation of slavery. She is placed in a social condition of sexual abuse, exploitation and violence. And numerous young girls, mere children, are submitted to similar experiences through this system of 'sacred' prostitution. Barry's (1979:40) words truly fit the experience of the sacred prostitute:

It is a political crime of violence against women, an act of power and domination. Kate Millet coined the term 'sexual politics'. Sexual slavery is the very essence of sexual politics in its most extreme and ugly form. We have come to understand rape as a political act rather than the isolated, private experience of individual woman.

6.1.4 The role of caste in sacred prostitution: initiation

Like Hema, all the 250 Devadasis and Basavis who formed the sample of my studies, came from the Scheduled Castes. Their patrons were from the Upper Caste/Class background. The control over the popular temple of Yellamma (a Scheduled Caste goddess) at Saundatti (see Chapter 5) where numerous girls are dedicated rests with the caste Hindus as well. Thus, not only is initiation patronized by the caste Hindus, but also control over the very dedication of the girls. Whether the motivation to dedicate the girls

arises from kith and kin, or from the Upper Castes, at the stage of initiation (with rituals to be followed and a fixed amount to be paid) it presents a financial crisis situation for the economically poor Scheduled Castes. Confronted with this situation they do seek financial assistance from the Upper Castes. For it is a custom among the economically poor (of whom most belong to the Scheduled Castes) to seek financial assistance from the Upper Castes at times of financial crisis such as illness, marriage, festivals or death. But in these situations the Scheduled Caste gradually pay the debt back from the wages they receive, or in the event of inability to return the amount, they extend extra hours of service or even become bonded labourers where they offer to work for a span of years free of claiming wages. However, when the financial need arises and the Scheduled Castes approach the Upper Caste landlords, it is extended at other occasions, provided on the basis of 'patronage' or 'deflowering' the girl and the liberty to have sexual access to her later. The parents of the 'sacred' prostitute, in order to avert the wrath of the god or goddess for not initiating the dedicated girl at puberty, consent to the earthly landlords/Upper Caste men and accept them as 'patrons' and the consequences.

6.1.5 The socio-cultural and power nexus in initiation of the 'sacred' prostitute

An examination of the articles used and the ritual carried out on the initiation day of the 'sacred' prostitute prior to the entry into the temple relates to culture, hygiene and therapy. For instance, the neem leaves have mysterious power and are associated with rituals. Oil, water and cool herbal neem leaves are used in cleansing and in herbal treatment. The turmeric is associated with fertility and purificatory measures. The cleansing followed by covering of the girl's naked body with neem leaves and a walk to the temple in the blazing sun and/or in the fresh air could have more significance than when seen from a mere hygienic point of view. For the process of cleansing the body, though carried out among all cultures and in all societies can vary and the value systems attributed to them can differ.

Although the above articles are in use in India today, especially by those who suffer from skin infections, how does the use differ in the case of the initiation ceremony?

6.1.6 Women and their bodies

In India, the examination of the prospective bride's body by the bridegroom's people prior to accepting her for marriage (in arranged marriages) continues in some communities even today. In other communities, investigations in some form or another from the family, relatives, friends, neighbours, etc. is carried out to ensure that the bride-to-be is free from illness or impediments such as physical handicaps. The procedure of examining the girls for sale (at fortnightly auctions in relation to prostitution -- see Chapter 5 under recruitment) is a crude examination of the girls by the prospective buyers. However, in the case of the 'sacred' prostitute the ritual bath allowed by the covering of her naked body with neem leaves by others (that provides an occasion for others to see her body) fulfills this aspect.

However, the reason for the examination or exposure of the bodies of the girls has various motivations. As stated above, in arranged marriages it is to ensure that the would-be bride is free from impediments and is in good health. In the case of purchasers for prostitution or concubinage it is to ascertain whether the girl possesses the necessary requirements (such as the cultural background, body and strength to cater to numerous clients, charm and education to function as an escort girl) in keeping with their expectations. In the case of initiation of 'sacred' prostitutes, the naked body of the girl exposes the presence of a white patch, or a spot affected by eczema, or the matted hair on her head, or her good health condition as the women cover her with leaves. The spotting of the white patch, eczema or matted hair is not interpreted as impediments but as confirmation of the call from the god or goddess thus providing a psychological justification for the initiation of the girl. There are rationalizations for initiation of those in good health, such as the fulfillment of vows made before the conception of the child or after, through

their own or other's initiative. Thus, various approaches and methodologies are adopted in Indian society to ascertain whether a girl is fit for initiation into sexual life using institutional forms of set screening patterns.

Even in situations where gangs are involved in trafficking, generally assessment of the kidnapped or abducted is carried out in relation to the type of prostitution which they could be forced into. Thus women and bodies undergo scrutiny prior to sexual relations in various forms under various institutions, subjecting them to humiliation and dehumanization. However, under all the above institutions, generally the man's health condition remains unquestioned. Even if a man is known to be suffering from venereal diseases, sexual relations with the virgin are resorted to by some as a healing measure. The myth that sexual relations with virgins cures venereal diseases prevails in India. A 67 year old man becoming the patron of an 11 or 12 year old takes place in contemporary times (see Chapter 5), which indicates that even the age gap in the initiation is overlooked thus exposing the girl to venereal diseases, psychological incompatibility and violence.

6.1.7 The 'touching ceremony'

The initiation ceremony is called the 'touching ceremony' as the first man (the patron) touches the girl. A 'sacred' prostitute has no marriage and thus her relationship is not committed to one man. As such, the occasion when the first man touches her is called the 'touching ceremony'. Other names used are 'deflowering', 'hennu maduvuddu' or 'hannu maduvudu', and 'gejja puja'.

6.1.8 Purity vs auspiciousness

An Upper Caste women, if she is widowed, is considered as inauspicious and a bad omen. A Low Caste or a Scheduled Caste woman with a husband is considered as auspicious and a mangalanari or sumangali (good omen). Thus there is tension between a

widow born in a caste that is considered of the pure yet is accorded low status, and a Scheduled Caste non-widow, born in a ritually 'impure' caste, who is accorded a higher status.

6.1.9 Virginitv and purity vs non-virginitv and impurity

In the Indian context, sexual relations are generally followed by ritual baths and purificatorv measures and are forbidden in certain communities on days such as ceremonies related to ancestors, etc. Thus impurity is attached to non-virgins and purity to virgins. Under the above two dichotomies, the auspiciousness and virginitv are attached to the 'sacred' prostitute at the time of initiation. Her auspiciousness arises out of her marriage with the deity. Thus justification is drawn by some people for the involvement of the Upper Castes as patrons in initiation.

6.1.10 Demand for virgins

However, with demand for virgins through the institution of prostitution, for reasons such as pleasure and as a precautionarv health measure. Traffickers pay a higher amount for the initiation ceremony than patrons, but do not deflower the girl. They immediately sell her to other places as a virgin for a much higher price, for instance, to urban areas. 'Sacred' prostitutes (Devadasis) can be seen in red light areas functioning under brothel keepers as well as independently through dedication of new girls.

Today, the Devadasi/Basavi system exists in several places in India. In Athani, Karnataka district alone, places such as Mugalkod, Mangsooli, Kokatnoor, Tardal, Kudchi and in villages like Shankarahatti and Tharoor this system exists. In Bijapur District and City (Karnataka) in the border area of Maharashtra, the Devadasi belt can be identified. Jamkhandi, Mudhol, Sindgi, Indi, Bagalkot, Bagewadi, Rabkavi, Ranhatti are some of the towns with a Devadasi system. Villages like Bableshwar, Tikota, Mungooli, Hanoor,

Kalebag, Tegali, Chickbarmer, Kamatgi, Kanoli, Moratgi, Haunsnoor and Nidgundi are known to have concentration of prostitutes (including Devadasis).

In Saundatti, Karnataka, as stated by my friend who visited the place, nearly 1,000 saris are tied up in bundles and hang from the ceiling of the temple. The offerings of gold and silver ornaments made by the devotees which amount to lakhs of rupees give evidence of the popularity of this temple which is associated with the dedication of Devadasis. The systems of sacred prostitution, as well as the traditional singing and dancing girls, are becoming a source of supply of girls for contemporary prostitution in India. However, judging the initiation process from the perspective of a child it is a terrible situation of human rights violation, abuse and exploitation of children in India.

6.1.11 Health conditions and initiation

The use of articles that are therapeutic and the hygienic measures adopted prior to entry into the temple does guarantee some health and safety measures for the Upper Caste patrons (whether they are with or without physical illness). For instance, the clean clothes worn and the new carpet or mat used as a bed ensure cleanliness. However, subjecting a young girl (a child who has not reached the age of consent) to sexual relations (referred to as a traumatic experience by most which has unnerved others to this day) can be a conscious and/or unconscious motive for those dedicating as well as those who patronize them too. Often the economic aspect in 'sacred' prostitution is highlighted: the dimension of culture and violence is either not recognized or even if recognized to some extent seldom acknowledged (see Chapter 3).

6.1.12 The Upper Caste-Scheduled Caste nexus in initiation

The parents or guardians who dedicate the girls as 'sacred' prostitutes are generally from the Scheduled Castes. They are often illiterate, as such ignorant in many fields, and

generally have belief in superstitions. They either voluntarily or at the suggestion of others (involuntarily) do dedicate their children as 'sacred' prostitutes (see Chapter 5). Although an element of rejection or exploitation of girls who are affected with eczema, white patches on their bodies or have matted hair on their heads can be discernible in the act of dedication and initiation, most of the reasons provided for dedication are related to hygiene or health conditions. However, they are often interpreted as cultural and religious factors with connotations of superstitions. These health reasons could be overcome through medication and treatment. In fact, some of the areas I visited had acute water problems. Medical facilities were not easily accessible. These people needed education and assistance to overcome their health problems. Mobile health care facilities with better sanitary conditions, better intake of nourishment could result in getting over these 'signs' that are attributed as the 'call' of god. Besides, among the Scheduled Castes, these health conditions do not pose a problem when it comes to getting a girl married, as among other groups in society where arranged marriages are in vogue. There is more acceptance of people with these conditions among the Scheduled Castes themselves.

However, what is striking among the Upper Castes is the fact that they (for instance, the landlords) do help the labourers when they approach them for financial assistance, for example, at times of festivals, marriages, illness and death in the family. On these occasions they generally assist them financially. Later when they are unable to return the amount they make the labourers bonded labourers, exploit their women, etc. (see Chapter 3). However, when the Scheduled Castes face a financial crisis to fulfill their vows, i.e. to carry out the initiation ceremony of their dedicated girls, the Upper Caste men not only extend finance but also function as patrons.

The payment and the sexual exploitation of women and girls is considered as prostitution. However, in the situation of initiation it becomes a serious matter as the person exploited is a child (who has not reached the age of consent). The Scheduled Castes, at

times of need, dedicate the child for particular favours (see Chapter 5). However, when initiation comes they are confronted with a further crisis: the economic problem of paying for rituals and celebration. A warning and explanation that this double crisis situation will arise could be communicated to them to ward off the future crisis. But the Upper Castes are ready, and even come forward to pay for the initiation and to function as patrons. Generally the origin of this situation is attributed to economic problems by the public.

However, a perusal of history of 'sacred' prostitution indicates that the origin of this system of 'sacred' prostitution is more a cultural than an economic phenomenon (see Wake, 1888; Frazer, 1907:23; Westermarck, 1921:210-19; Mantegazza n.d.:245-446; Havelock Ellis, 1936:232; Mancini, 1963:15; Rachewiltz, 1964:110-11; Mannhardt, W., 1975:Vol. 11:284). Henriques, Fernando (1961:33) points out that 'Basically the religious prostitution is to be regarded as part of the great complex of fear and sentiment which surrounds sexual intercourse' (1961:33). Westermarck (1925:Vol.III:64-5) indicates how in many societies the defloration is surrounded with a strange mystique compounded with fear, magic and dread of the supernatural. One basic fear being the association of hymenal blood with menstrual blood. He (1921:190) states that the fear of defloration is no doubt closely connected with hymenal blood. He points to Vedic literature that the blood of the bridal night is represented as a poison. The hymenal blood may also be regarded as dangerous to the offspring.

In relation to defloration of the bride, Joardar (1983:19) quotes Jubainville, H. d'Arbois de:332 as follows:

The defloration of the bride is undertaken by a group of males and thus the husband can escape the danger of the initial intercourse. Similarly we also find that in lieu of a defloration by several persons, many a person who is regarded as a king, priest could stand in the place of husband. The sacred power of such individuals is sufficient to overcome the evil which is implicit in defloration ...

The above defloration of virgins is set in the framework of marriage (the bride's defloration) and as needing several males or the king or a priest with sacred power as

sufficient to overcome the evil which is implicit in defloration. In this situation the mysterious power associated with hymenal blood is considered evil or dangerous.

In the Indian situation under initiation the defloration is set in the context of marriage with a god or goddess. The blood of the Scheduled Caste woman who is considered as the ritually impure, as a result of her dedication is said to possess mysterious or sacred power which accords to those who have sexual relations with her. It brings increase for man and animals and fertility to the earth. Thus a tension exists in the perception of defloration in relation to the blood of a man that was considered pure and on which his power rested, and the even greater power which comes from the blood of the bride of a god or goddess (a 'sacred' prostitute).

One of the reasons for this tension could be the origin of 'sacred' prostitution in India that is said to have existed in a matrilineal society where the 'sacred' prostitute had a high status due to her dedication. It is also the understanding of many academics that the Aryans assimilated into their religion some of the indigenous gods and goddesses. Aryanism or the Aryan society, as evident today, is patrilineal with 'sacred' power attached to the twice born or the Upper Castes symbolized (or interpreted as such) by the wearing of the 'sacred' thread. Thus through the assimilation of non-gods and goddesses, Aryanism, in relation to the dedication of Scheduled Caste girls, faced a conflict of power. Kananaikil (ed. 1983) presents the power theory (for instance, the struggle between the Aryans and the indigenous people the Dasas) and Moffatt (1979) propounds the culture theory (for instance, by pointing to a cultural system containing elements of a pre-Aryan and non-Brahmanic value system (Cohn, 1955)). It is possible that the 'sacred' power of the Scheduled Caste dedicated girl and the 'sacred' power of the Upper Caste men were in confrontation with one another. In spite of this power struggle, however, the system of dedicating girls was not discouraged. As discussed earlier (see Chapter 5) it provided the Upper Castes with a steady flow of girls and was of financial benefit to the temple. There is

a rape paradigm in this context, i.e. the deflowering of the Scheduled Castes girls and through payment and sexual exploitation (or prostitution) the girl is made a 'prostitute'. Among the Scheduled Castes, the prostitute is considered of low status. Thus the original position held by the 'sacred' prostitute is now reversed to the lowest place in Indian society. The dedicated girl may be known as a 'sacred' prostitute, but judging from the conditions in which she lives today and is treated by society, her experience is one of powerlessness at initiation.

Today, besides the 'sacred' prostitute being sexually exploited in her own village, her involvement in trafficking is obvious (see Table 7, Chapter 5). The Upper Castes can function as traffickers too. It is not a new phenomenon to be a patron for many girls and some of the girls could easily be trafficked. The Scheduled Castes at the local level can do very little about it, as Amir Hussain points out (1982). A local patron can be a collaborator in the vice as well by paying for the girl's ritual but assisting her to be trafficked. Amir Hassan (1975), has pointed this out in relation to trafficking in Kolta women in North India. In fact 'many Brahmins and Rajputs (Kshatriyas) have assumed the role of traffickers or their agent provocateurs and it has become extremely difficult to bring the culprits to book under the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, 1956'.

Calling the Devadasi for deflowering (or initiation) to his place could easily take place and trafficking arranged. There are various strategies adopted by traffickers which will surface to some extent in some of the case histories that will follow.

6.2 THE TRADITIONAL SINGING AND DANCING GIRLS PROSTITUTION: INITIATION

In the previous chapter, under the classification of the 'traditional singing and dancing girls' prostitution, the aspect of recruitment was discussed. This section examines

the initiation of the singing and dancing girls into prostitution. Crooke (1975:367) mentions tribes and castes of North-Western India such as the Ramjani and the Gandharap (practically all Hindus) the Maghahiya, Chhata, Janghariya, Naurangi, Mirasi, Gauharin, Domin and Akashkamini (nearly all Muslims), among whom the traditional singing and dancing girls prostitution exists. According to him, none of their girls get married. He describes the initiation of their singing and dancing girls as follows:

When a girl is seven or eight years old, she is put under the instruction of a Dhari or Kathak, who teaches her how to dance and sing. At the commencement of her education, some sweets are offered at a mosque, and then distributed among Mohammedan Fakirs. At the first lesson, the master is given a present in money and some sweetmeats, and their fees are about four or five rupees per mensem. When the girl reaches puberty and her breasts begin to develop the right of *angiya* or the 'assumption of the bodice' is performed. On this occasion some of the brethren are invited for a feast. After this the girl is sold to some rich paramour. This is known as *Sirdhankai* or 'the covering of the head'. When she returns after her first visit to her paramour, the brethren are feasted on sweetmeats. This follows the rite of *missi* which takes its name from the black powder used in colouring the teeth. She is dressed like a bride and taken in procession through the streets and afterwards she takes her seat at a party (*mehfil*), where the brethren assemble and sing and dance. Her teachers (*ustads*) are remunerated and the brethren are fed on *Kachchi* and *Pakki*, according to the means of the family. This feast can also be postponed; but in that case she cannot stain her teeth until it is obligatory. This rule is now said to be gradually relaxed at Lucknow (in Uttar Pradesh, North India). The *missi* represents the final initiation into a life of harlotry. After the rite of *missi* the girl ceases to wear the nose ring, and hence the ceremony is sometimes known as *nathni utara*, the taking off of the nose ring.

The *Gazeteer of Bombay Presidency* (Vol. XXIII, Bijapur, Government Central Press, Bombay, 1884:184-5) for instance, provides information on dancing women of Bijapur, Karnataka (believed to have settled there after their migration from Telangana of Andhra Pradesh): 'The women dance and carry on prostitution; are careful of their appearance, wearing clean clothes, and decking their heads with false hair and gold ornaments.' Gandharb, Gandhava, caste of singers and prostitutes are found in small numbers only in Banaras, Allahabad and Ghazipur (see 'Recruitment' in Chapter 5).

Among singing and dancing girls interviewed by me, the case history of Mohana from South India, who gave acrobatics performances in an entertainment team, relates her initiation into brothel life:

Case history 12

I was trained in acrobatics from childhood. I could perform various dances that need a lot of skill. These dances include the fire dance, balancing pots on the head, the dance with birds, exercises that involved a lot of climbing and use of ladders, etc. As soon as I became a teenager, I was enrolled in an entertainment team. I had to tour with the troupe for the performances in various villages. People appreciated my performances. After the performance the performers have to come on stage. From the huge crowd that gathers for these open theatre performances at night, spectators would rush to the stage and pin currency notes on our clothes. These notes were considered as our personal gifts. However, these were terrible times when men pawed my body, etc. This was a seasonal programme. My income with gifts would come up to Rs.3030 a season. Although I got married shortly after joining the team, my husband did not stop me from taking part in this entertainment programme.

One of the disadvantages of this entertainment group was that it was always on the move during the season. When the crowd lessened the troupe had to move to another place. Besides, before shifting from one place to another (that's before winding up) the organizers would extend a big dinner for troupe members. This involved taking alcoholic drinks and returning home or to the place of stay in the early hours of the morning. In my home town, my husband would generally come to take me home. In other places I joined others to return to the place where accommodation for us was arranged.

On one occasion, the whole troupe was assembled after the final performance for the dinner. Many, including myself, had taken alcoholic drink. I remember one of the men from the troupe calling me out. He stated that he would take me to my residence in his car. I agreed to go with him and he must have dropped me at the brothel in the early hours of the day. It was only during the day that I realized that I was in a brothel. There was no way of escape. I was soon initiated by force into prostitution.

The experiences of some cabaret artists who come from a Christian background are somewhat similar. After their night performances in entertainment clubs, they return home, often alone, in the early hours of the morning. On these occasions, they are under the influence of alcohol as the dinner is always provided by one or other of the spectators and includes drinks. Some will offer to give a lift in their car. To avoid letting them know where they live (as they often live in dire poverty) they get down somewhere near their locality. Thus whether they get a lift in the car or return alone, there is always danger to their lives in

walking a short or a long distance alone in the early hours. However, Julie states 'In such circumstances we have no choice but to face danger. For once we are caught in the clutches of the organizers, it is difficult to withdraw till the contract is over. It is already affecting my heart.'

But how do girls get into the clutches of organizers? Mary explains how she got into the clutches of a 'gangster':

Case history 13

My father and mother had no children. They said that they adopted me when I was a little girl. They took care of me and I had a happy childhood. Whenever some relatives or friends came home I talked to them, brought in food for them, etc. Shortly after I became a big girl I was asked to take some cool drinks to the visitors. I took the tray of drinks. But one of five men from the gang got up and closed the door. I was afraid. They said that there was nothing to fear. They had heard that I was a good dancing girl and so wanted to see me dance. I was nervous as they were touching me and forcing me to dance. I wanted to get away from that place but told them that I would come back soon. However, they caught hold of me and would not let me go or call out to my parents. One of them took a packet of white powder and put it in one of the tumblers. He then forced me to drink. Others said that I would dance better under the influence of the drug. The gang of five men gave me a hard humiliating time. They took many photographs.

Since then I have been in their clutches. I am expected to stay where they want me. To go to places where they wish by threatening that they will not only publish my photographs but will kill me wherever I may be if I do not obey them. Thus, I carry out their wishes in fear -- black mailing.

The life-histories of dancing and singing girls indicate that the organizers adopt a strategy of befriending girls with talents in dancing and singing, con them into dependency, season them with fear and submission and turn them into prostitutes. Mary states

Once in the club we are in the lime light with colourful dresses, painted faces, with music, a band, drink and the company of the so called "elite men". But once off the stage, we are back to reality. For our work is seasonal, so we need to borrow and we sink into debt. The rich men who show "romance" towards us in the club dare not look at us once we are out of the club. They go about as "respectable men" and we are considered as low dancing girls and shunned even by society. And sexual abuse of cabaret artists happens even from the very organizers of these programmes.

In the life-history of Julie (Case history 14), her initiation into prostitution began through sex and violence in a blue film. Later she was forced to work as a call girl.

In our homes (in our locality) there were no TVs. As such, we (the children of our locality) were sometimes sent for when there was a film. One day, shortly after I came of age, I was sent for as usual. I found out that this time it was different; it was to be the shooting of a film and it would take a long time, for which reason the other children were not sent for. They offered me some refreshments. An orange cool drink. As I sipped the cool drink they were fixing the equipment. I thought that the men were getting ready for shooting the film. All this time I thought that someone else or others were being filmed. It was our group that they were shooting. They said, 'Let's dance now'. I was reluctant to dance as I did not know how. One of the young men caught hold of me and said that he would teach me how to dance. What went on I was partly conscious of and partly unconscious. All I was certain after my return home was that I bled and that violence had been exercised on my body. Although the physical pain disappeared gradually, I can never forget what they have done to me. This was the initiation which later started my life as a call girl.

The link of entertainment, drug, sex, blue film/pornography and prostitution under 'relaxation, entertainment and pleasure' is evident in the above case histories of prostitutes (under the second classification). Although under the three classifications of prostitution drawn out for the purpose of this study, the evidence of this second classification has the least respondents, it does not necessarily mean that its extent is the lowest in India. For there are no statistics available of the actual extent of prostitution (in whatever form it may be carried on in the country). However, the traditional form of dancing ('mujra' or the singing and dancing girls cited earlier in this chapter) exists both in urban and rural India but not to a great extent. The cabaret and other forms connected with dancing and films (stated under the second category) are prevalent in predominantly urban cosmopolitan cities and places such as Goa, which men from multicultural backgrounds (local as well as others, such as the tourists) frequent, and the women and girls from multicultural backgrounds (such as Christians, Hindus and Muslims) are drawn for performance as well.

From my observation of prostitution in some of the Western countries (Holland, France, Italy, Switzerland and U.K.), this category of prostitution (second classification) seems to be predominant. While the first category of 'sacred' (culture) prostitution is specific to the East, the third category that includes various other forms of prostitution has

some similarities and variations in keeping with specific cultural backgrounds. While the first classification revolves around a religio-cultural setting (in relation mainly to the 'sacred' power), this second classification predominantly has its emphasis on 'leisure' and the idea that money can buy anything, or with the underlying concept 'money is power'. This situation results in cultural oppression and violence as the case histories of young girls show. The role of caste plays an important part in this classification of prostitution by licensing centres that include such programmes and encouraging tourism that focuses on these 'pleasure' or 'entertainment' programmes (see Chapter 3 in relation to Goa).

6.3 CONTEMPORARY PROSTITUTION: INITIATION

Under this classification of contemporary prostitution, various types of prostitution that do not directly come under the above two categories are included (see Chapter 5 for various types of prostitution). These forms, whether known to the public or carried on in a clandestine manner, have their own procedure of initiation. The following life-history of 16 year old Karuna, an 'escort girl', illustrates the aspect of 'initiation'.

Case history 15

After the completion of my secondary school, I wanted to take up a job and support our family income. Under 'job vacancies' in the newspaper I came to know that there was a post vacant in a firm in Bombay that offered a good salary and accommodation for a girl who had completed her secondary school and had a good knowledge of English. Since I had these requirements and needed a good salary with accommodation, I applied for the post [16 year old Karuna is a tall, well built, beautiful girl who looked almost 18 or 19]. I had enclosed the necessary documents and photographs.

I was happy to receive a prompt reply from the firm informing me that I had been selected for the post and as per the firm's policy, the travel expenses would be met by them. And being a minor a staff member would be sent to my residence to bring me over to the firm. The dates of the arrival of the staff member and details of travel and the agreement were specified.

Accordingly, the lady arrived. My family got to know that 'kind' lady and after ascertaining various facts related to my work and stay in Bombay, I took leave

of my family. They (my family) did have the address of my firm and knew details of the agreement that I could extend the contract if I wished to do so or return home after a few months.

On arrival at Bombay Central, a posh car waited for us, and soon we reached the firm which was situated in a residential area. A long drive through a beautiful garden and greenery led to the entrance. We were received by young men, who were introduced as 'Receptionists'. I had always associated 'Receptionists' with ladies. However, once in, we were welcomed by a man who provided breakfast, and made enquiries about the journey and advised that we take a good rest. My self-contained room was shown to me by them and they left. I did have a good rest.

However, from then on I never met that 'kind' lady. There were a couple of rooms; sometimes the doors used to be open, but I never saw the girls. It was later explained to me that each one's job took them to different places and involved different timings. I found the place quiet. However, the conditions, such as the accommodation, were good. I did write home about my safe arrival, the welcome accorded to me, the lovely setting and a room all for myself. Soon the nature of my work was explained to me. I would have to accompany guests who came for sight seeing in Bombay. When I expressed the fact that I was new to Bombay and did not know the place myself, I was told that the firm's car would take me and bring me back, I would be introduced to the driver, and by and by I would get to know Bombay when I could go independently. And at these sight-seeing periods, since they paid I ought to please them, such as giving them a break and some relaxation if they wanted, accepting their invitation for dinner, etc. I wanted to do my duty well and be a good guide to the guest. I was informed that a guest would arrive and I should get ready. On his arrival, I was introduced and I got into the car.

Most of the day went in sight seeing. The wealthy guest suggested that the driver stop for us at a five star hotel for our dinner and wait for our return. At dinner he expressed the desire that we have a short rest instead of straight away leaving after a big dinner. So after the dinner he got up to find a suitable place for us to relax a bit. He got up and closed the door. Then he began to tell me that he had paid for me. I could not understand him. He came towards me and whilst raping me he called me an 'escort girl' -- a prostitute. Before I could recover from the shock the guest had disappeared and there stood the driver telling me to hurry as it was late.

The initiation of young girls in five star hotels is not something that does not take place. With today's availability of facilities extended by hotels, such as accommodation, provision of meals and other facilities, for occasions such as marriages, conferences, dinners, parties, entertainment programmes, etc., prostitution, whether known or unknown to the proprietors of hotels, with or without their collaboration, generally takes place. In Karuna's situation she was taken away shortly by the driver. However, with Jenny who was younger than Karuna, just around 14 years, the situation was different.

I was going to school regularly. When I grew up my mother told me not to go to school for some days. So I remained at home and played with the little children in our compound. Although I was alright I was not sent to school. So I played with the children most of the time. One day while we were at play we were told to get ready as a car would come to take us for a drive. All of us (children) ran in and with the help of others in the houses got dressed. As soon as the car came we all got in. We were taken to a hotel and all enjoyed tea and snacks. It was a big five star hotel. I was taken to see the inside of the nice hotel and the other small children were sent to the car as they would create noise.

The man who took me (a family friend) introduced me, during the rounds, to a man who stood near his room. He called us to come in. A little later the man (our family friend) stated that he would talk to others and return soon but never did. I was caught in the clutches of the rich man who kept me in his room and raped me many times.

(Jenny had to stop here. This situation she attributes as her initiation into prostitution. At the time of the interview she was working as a call girl).

In relation to cultural sadism, Barry (1979:248) states:

Cultural sadism is the ideology of men in power, of the patriarchy. It creates the measure of viewing and valuing women and deftly integrates it into society's basic constitutional beliefs and values which in turn help the ideology flourish ... Based on a belief in natural rights, the principles of individualism in democracy require that one can not be interfered with in the pursuit of happiness unless that pursuit interferes with another's exercise of life and liberty.

Democracy asserts an atmosphere of pluralism upon which the ideology of cultural sadism thrives. Diversity of sexual perversion fits neatly into the pluralistic notion of cultural diversity and is reduced to the colloquialism 'different strokes for different folks'. No one should question, no one should mind how anyone acts on their sexual needs. Thus society guarantees the right to freedom of expression. Pornography, as the argument goes, isn't hurting anyone else, so if a guy wants it he should have it.

I agree with Barry and the conclusion she draws that the objects of cultural sadism (one must do violence to the object of one's desire; when it surrenders, the pleasure is greater) cannot be people. It is a violation of women's life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. It comes in conflict with women's and children's rights. It often claims that no one is being violated or no one's right is abrogated, and therefore the one who is the object of cultural sadism does not exist as a person. Thus with its objects or victims defined as non-persons, cultural sadism is a sanctioned right. The case histories in this chapter (as well as all the

virgins and non-virgins among non-Upper Castes) did suffer greatly at initiation. Among the Upper Castes, although they did suffer, in comparison with the others their situation was lesser (see Chapter 7). Besides, when prostitution is in the family (as in the case of a Brahmin girl from Calcutta) the family chooses a client suitable for initiation and make the situation not so threatening for the girl. However, in most situations women and girls who were initiated into prostitution learn submission gradually through various means adopted by others such as labelling her as a 'prostitute' for life, treating her as a prostitute, through stigmatization or rejection and segregation by society. The traffickers branding her, making incisions on her face or body to indicate that she is an object for purchase and exploitation. They threaten and terrorize the prostitute, even physically harm her, and demand submission. They make her stand at the window or in public places as an object of pleasure. The client equates her with a commodity by purchasing her for his satisfaction and demeans her. The prostitute considers the loss of her virginity as a loss of human dignity and a great dishonour inflicted on her. After initiation she experiences worthlessness and dehumanization. 11% of the 1,100 prostitutes of my first study (see Table 1) who stated that they were persistently coerced and later agreed to enter prostitution, were already non-virgins. Those coerced into prostitution generally went through a process of socialization, as in the case of Gowramma (case history 17).

6.4 SOCIALIZATION

Case history 17

I am in my early thirties. I lost my husband four years ago. Since my husband had savings and I did get money from his office I was able to carry on my life. My neighbours and friends were very sympathetic and kind. That helped me to bear my husband's loss as well.

However, for the past year or so, one of my husband's friends was persistently worrying me to get involved in a four-hour programme. According to this programme, I have to give four hours to a client. Either 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. or 5

p.m. to 9 p.m. This would include lunch (if midday) or dinner (if in the evening). The organizers would inform me of the time, place and further details. Conveyance if needed would be parked at the place I specify. A commission would be taken by the organizers for their services (contacting clients, arranging meals, sending a vehicle, for the agents and those related to protection) and the balance would be given to me.

I did not respond to him for a long time. The friend began to place before me my future life. 'How long is your husband's money going to last?' he would say. In the end I agreed to try once. The friend soon introduced me to the organizer. I was given details of their expectations which included manner of dress, speech and deportment, etc. (socialization). I was advanced money for the necessities even without asking as this could be easily deducted later.

As stated, I was informed of the time to get ready and the conveyance was sent. As I wanted the midday programme, I had to take lunch with the client who was an Upper Caste businessman. His shop remained open from 9-1 p.m. and 4-8 p.m. Generally, an hour earlier in the morning and an hour in the evening is taken for cleaning, settling and resettling things etc. His family would not expect him before 9 p.m. For him both the midday programme and the evening programme would be suitable. However, for the midday programme he could always leave an hour earlier as he sometimes did when he had some outside work. So I had lunch and spent the remaining time (of the four hours for which he had paid) with him, and returned home. No one except my friend, the organizer and the client knew what had taken place. I was not at ease. I felt I had offended God by doing a wrong thing and had also been unfaithful to my husband. I had stooped to behave like this. Later that day an envelope was sent to me. The bearer handed over the envelope and left. When I opened it, it contained Rs.200.

While trafficking consists of kidnap, deception, sale and resale, it also adopts befriending ways or love, to introduce girls and women (especially single women) into prostitution. They pose as people who are concerned, to try just once. Confidentiality and support of this 'easy way of making money' is extended. They universalize this situation by stating that so many women in her condition are following this way of life for their survival and she is not the only one. They rationalize that this is a 'legitimate way of earning' for a person in her situation (a widow). Persistent coercion such as this has made them enter and gradually be exploited by the organizers and the clients. This situation is illustrated by Leela and Manjula in the following case histories, 18 and 19 respectively.

Case history 18

Leela, a young woman in her twenties, who follows the four-hour programme, states:

While returning from the hotel, the client offered to drop me near the locality where I live. But on the way a serious accident took place. Although I needed medical care, I could not go to the hospital as I had to declare with whom I went and the identity of the client. The clandestine affair would come to light in attending the court. The organization that promised confidentiality and support at situations such as these do not get involved, leaving our lives in this fatal situation.

Case history 19

In Manjula's case (who has a child) the organizers send the clients to her home. She states:

One of them took away my child. I could not lodge a complaint as my clandestine affair would come to light. The organizers do not take responsibility and let us down when we are in such situations. I am making enquiries to trace the whereabouts of my child.

Although the cultural background (as in the case of Manjula who comes from an Anglo-Indian community) and violence form part of the life-histories of prostitutes who submit to enter prostitution through befriending or persistent coercion, the life-histories of the greater majority (see Table 8) go through a process of victimization from recruitment to initiation into prostitution. Whichever the form of recruitment and initiation may be, the ultimate motive is the sexual assault on their bodies and psyche.

6.5 VICTIMIZATION

Victimization consists of crude forms to violate their sense of worth and human dignity. The life-histories of 735 prostitutes or 67% of the sample (see Table 8) indicate the combination of culturally designed moral debasement and physical battering through which the traffickers aim at bringing a rapid metamorphosis from being respectable people with

dignity and freedom to being sellers of sex and slavery. Subjugation of women through victimization is often either not recognized, and even if recognized is generally taken in the context of female subjugation that is legitimized or considered part and parcel of keeping women's sexuality under control (see Chapter 3 on dual perception of women regarding the 'nature' of women). The following Table provides the mode of initiation into prostitution under the national four year study (1983-86).

Table 8
Mode of initiation into prostitution

Forms of initiation	Frequency	Total	Percentage
<u>Violent forms (victimization)</u>			
Abducted/kidnapped/auctioned/sold/resold	124	-	-
Deceived and sold	103	-	-
Sold and resold repeatedly	100	-	-
Raped/gang raped and sold	20	-	-
Fake marriage/raped/deserted/forced	164	-	-
Conditioned by religious custom (Devadasis/Basavis/Kalavanths)	224	-	-
		735	67
<u>Non-violent forms (socialization)</u>			
Lured or co-erced	124	124	11
Information not available	-	241	22
Total:	1,100	1,100	100

6.6 AGE FACTOR

The above situation, when considered in relation to the age of prostitutes, illustrates the seriousness of the situation. For 585 of the prostitutes (53.2%) were below 18 years, 256 (23.3%) between 18 and 21 years, 48 (4.4%) 21-30 years, 1 (0.1%) 30 and above, with no information from the other 210 (19.0%) about their ages. Even girls in the prepubertal stage are initiated into prostitution as the following case history of Kanamma from rural India relates (case history 20):

Case history 20

I am from Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh. In our village the school is only till Std. V. To continue my studies, I had to go to a distant town. I joined the other few girls of the village at dawn, and walked the distance to school. As soon as the school was over we had to rush home as there are no lighting facilities on the road. When I was in Std. VII a girl from Std. IX used to talk to me regularly. She always invited me to come to her house. As I had to rush home I never went to her house.

One day, due to some function, we had no classes. We were free. The girl (of Std. IX) said that she would take me in a bus, show me her house and we could return. So after walking a short distance, we got into a bus. The bus was filled to capacity and came to a halt in a big bus station. There were numerous shops, tea stalls and crowds of people. As soon as the bus stopped, all the people in the bus began to get out of the bus one by one. Due to the crowd in the bus both my friend and myself could not be together. So, as soon as I got down I looked for her but could not find her. I searched and searched for her but there was no sign of her. I was desperate. I began to cry for if I can't return in time the girls (my companions from the village) would leave and I would not be able to go home in the dark. The place was new and I was lost. As I looked around, a milk vendor came to me and enquired why I was crying. The milk vendor took pity on me and offered to take me home. But she wanted to leave her vessels at home first. So I accompanied her to her house. She was preparing some drink and food for me. I was not in the mood to eat or drink. However, when she finished she brought them to me and asked me to have them. I told her that I didn't feel like having anything. She insisted that I at least take the drink. So to get going, I took the drink.

We soon reached another bus stand. Several buses came, but not the bus we needed. Suddenly, at the arrival of a bus, she caught hold of my hand and said to get in. It was not our village bus and so I did not want to get in and I wanted to tell her that it was the wrong bus. But when I tried to tell her, I could not speak properly. The green drink she gave me had made my tongue thick and numb. I tried to free my hands from her grip, but she pulled me with all her might. The people around were eager to get into the bus and enquired what was happening. The milk vendor said that I was a dumb girl and a very adamant one too. She asked for help and they all pushed me into the bus. At one of the bus stands, she got down and others made me get down too.

The milk vendor caught hold of my hand with an iron grip and led me to the nearby huts. There were some girls standing near the entrance of some of the huts. I was soon handed over to a young man in that place and he put me in one of the huts.

I learnt from the girls in the hut that this was Chilukkalrupetta. [The girl did not know anything at that time about prostitution. This place is known for prostitution.] Soon I was told to change my dress and put on the bright clothes and cheap ornaments given by them and to stand in the entrance. After this they asked me to call out for men. I refused to do so. I was told that I was purchased and had to clear the debt borrowed to purchase me and my maintenance. If I refused to entertain clients I would have no food. I did not conform to their wishes. I was put inside a dark room and locked in. I was starved for a couple of days and one day several men came inside the room and I was raped by them. Thus I was initiated into prostitution.

Later, after her rescue, she grew up at an institution (i.e. shortly before I interviewed her). In relation to small girls obtained for prostitution in Bombay the system followed by the Khattawallahs or money lenders of Falkland Road (red light area) is like this:

Young girls below the age of seven, either kidnapped or obtained by force, threat or payment by middlemen, are sold to the brothel keepers and kept with these Khattawallahs. The Khattawallahs and the brothel keepers are bound by a mutually beneficial commercial agreement. The Khattawallahs pay for the goods, clothing and general upkeep of the girls till such a time as they are old enough to join the brothel. Files are maintained by them in which the amount spent is jotted down regularly every week. After a period of around six to seven years when the girl has crossed the age of puberty she is collected by the brothel keeper and absorbed in the business. Part of the earnings of the girls are used to pay off the debt accumulated over the years. It usually takes the girl around five years to clear the debts. By then she is ... beyond rehabilitation ('Buying and Selling of Indian Women', *For You*, June, Fortnight, 1978, Vol. III, No. 12, p. 11).

Dr Gilada states 'Many young girls are given hormonal preparations or indigenous vaginal sticks so that they are able to become functioning prostitutes at an early age' (*Asian Regional Conference Report*, New Delhi, 1989, p. 76). One of the young expectant mothers in prostitution who is nearing her delivery states in her life-history (Julie, case history 14):

Even the babe in my womb is not spared in this world. They are pestering me to sell the infant for Rs.3000 soon after delivery (see Rita Rozario, 1988, pp. 82-5, 'Rates and prices for women and children for prostitution in India').

From the life-histories of prostitutes in India most are initiated into prostitution at puberty. It draws more Scheduled Castes as prostitutes and more Upper Castes/Classes men as patrons or initiators of girls into prostitution. The role of caste in prostitution can be seen as a result of the cultural-power struggle prevalent in India. A non-Upper Caste girl (such as a Scheduled Caste girl) in her puberty is considered the most fertile and pure (shakti + purity). This poses a challenge to an Upper Caste man who is considered the most powerful and pure. Being still a child, they are exploited by adults.

6.7 CHILDHOOD IN THE INDIAN TRADITION

Samskaras (rituals and celebrations) of childhood in India do contribute to the formation of the Indian consciousness and conception of childhood. In this regard, Kakar's (1981:43) comparison of human development under the framework of ahsramadharma in relation to psycho-analysis will prove useful. He presents 'childhood' (under the Hindu Scheme 'Individual's prehistory') as not considered.

However, under specific task and 'virtue', preparation of the capacity to comprehend dharma is indicated. According to him the Ayurvedic view is identical to that of the modern psychoanalytical view, which holds that in early life the infant must be thought of, 'not as an individual but only as a part of a nurturing unit, from which he gradually differentiates, as an individual, with the mothering partner serving as a catalyst and a living buffer.' This perception seems to extend to the whole of a girl's childhood (including puberty) resulting in perceiving her not as a person with rights of her own, but as an unfinished product, a commodity, that could be sold, purchased and sexually exploited. With men making the decisions in most families, even in matters of child bearing and child rearing, some women have become docile and cooperate in the sale and sexual exploitation of their daughters as well. Many of these women find no other alternative means of livelihood than to conform to the wishes of their husband.

6.8 CONCLUSION

There is an inclination among the public to perceive the involvement of all women and girls in prostitution as voluntary. This perception leads to categorizing them all as deviants, pleasure loving, sexy, lazy, lovers of easy money, immoral and/or sinners. While this perception may exist in other societies, in India, in the context of caste (a cultural

phenomenon unique to India) these women and girls are considered as 'impure' as well. As impurity is associated with Scheduled Castes, it is assumed by the public that all women and girls in prostitution belong to the Scheduled Castes who are considered as impure. Impurity is considered as natural to them, as their very make up. All women and girls in prostitution are believed to belong to the Scheduled Castes. Prostitution in India is seen as a Scheduled Caste phenomenon. And their involvement in prostitution is seen as voluntary.

On the other hand, the perception of Upper Caste women and girls is of being 'pure' (according to the concept of caste) and the public assume that it is against their nature to be involved in prostitution, so the Upper Castes are not involved in prostitution. As for those who do not come under these categories (whether caste is applicable or not) there is an understanding among people that some may be involved as they are not 'pure' but are 'impure', such as the 'Untouchables' or the Scheduled Castes.

Besides, in contemporary society at the global level, prostitution is considered as a sex-industry that is based on economy. In relation to the third world, it is associated with poverty, a phenomenon of the poor. However, in India where caste and class are interrelated, the Upper Castes are also the Upper Classes (see Chapter 3). The Scheduled Castes are of the lowest economic status or the poorest. Thus, prostitution is associated with the Scheduled Castes who are poor, and as being involved in prostitution for economic reasons (as an easy way of earning their living).

However, the analysis of data of respondents in prostitution in Bombay indicates the involvement of the Scheduled Castes as 55.2% of the sample, 23.2% as the Upper Castes and 21.6% as belonging to groups who consider caste as not applicable to them. I expected to find that more people from the Scheduled Castes were involved. But what was surprising was the high percentage of involvement of the Upper Castes in prostitution. Most of the third group came from Nepal or Bangladesh (neighbouring countries to India).

The next aspect that is highlighted by the proponents of legalization of prostitution is that they take up prostitution as an occupation, as their personal choice. Table 8 of this chapter clearly indicates that among 859 people who provided information on their entry 735 women and girls (85.6%) were initiated into prostitution in violent forms against their will (prostitution was not the occupation of their choice) and the remaining 124 (14.4%) were lured or coerced into it.

Considered from the angle of functioning independently, all forms of prostitution indicated that they were well organized under one pimp or brothel-keeper (sometimes by their own husband or father functioning as a pimp) and most of them caught up in a big network of trafficking in women and girls. While this phenomenon of trafficking could be a feature that is prevalent in some countries (for example in the Far East), in the context of caste in India, the most trafficked and exploited are those considered as the culturally low (the Scheduled Castes) and they form the most subjected to severe forms of violence. Thus the low cultural status can be related to the most vulnerable to exploitation and violence in Indian society.

In regard to the age factor of those initiated into prostitution, those below 18 years were 585 (65.5%) of the 893 respondents from whom information in this regard was available in the national study (see Rita Rozario, 1988). The attitude towards the girl child can be stated as one of the reasons for giving away the girl child. A girl at birth is considered as for giving away (generally in marriage). A boy is to remain in the house. He marries and brings his wife to his paternal home. While patriarchy (under the caste system) gives away the girl in Kanyadhan (gift of virgin to the bridegroom) and she leaves to go to her husband's house, under matriarchy (as evident among some Scheduled Caste families) the eldest girl is given away to the mother's brother in marriage. The girl is generally considered as not belonging permanently in her home. To a boy, his paternal home is his

permanent place, the immovable property, such as the land and houses (until under the present laws), belonged to him alone.

Just as women were used for duties and pleasure under matrimony and prostitution in society (pointed out in Chapter 4), girl children are used to satisfy the various needs of adults (to offer to a god for the healing of the father, as a thanksgiving for giving an issue and motherhood, for maintaining good relationships between caste factions, for economic benefits to the adults, for the property of the temples, and to have easy access to women and girls). In relation to the power struggle that exists between the Aryans (the Upper Castes) and the Dasyus (the Scheduled Castes) the girl child is made the victim (through ritual a sacrificial victim) who though innocent, is made to bear the violence inflicted on her (deflowering, repeated rape, disease, depravity, desertion, beggary, etc.) for the maintenance of good relationships and smooth running of Indian society.

However, the existence of caste in the prostitution world, the dynamics of relationship among the various caste groups of prostitutes and with those with whom they come in contact and live is an area hitherto unexplored by scholars. Chapter 7 on brothel life analyses the lives of prostitutes in the prostitution world.

CHAPTER 7

BROTHEL LIFE

7.1 INTRODUCTION

A 'brothel', according to the *Reader's Digest Great Encyclopaedic Dictionary* (1976), is a house where prostitutes are available. Writing on 'brothels', Ruth Mazo Karras (1996) states that brothels can range from private dwellings used on a casual and ad hoc basis, to enterprising establishments constructed by municipal legislation. Jacques Rossiaud (1988) provides details such as a number of towns in Continental Europe (France, Germany, Italy and Spain) as having had municipal owned or licensed brothels during the medieval and early modern periods. In France, most of the municipal publicum were constructed and maintained by the princely or municipal authorities, and were popularly referred to as 'le bordel' (the brothel). Prostitution was tolerated in places such as the inns, bath houses, taverns and private bordellos as well.

An examination of the life-histories of prostitutes in India in relation to brothels indicates that some of the prostitutes had no roof over their heads. For instance, the over one hundred Basavis ('sacred prostitutes') of Andhra Pradesh, at the time of my interview in 1984, lived far away from the town (as they were ostracized for being 'Untouchables' or the Scheduled Castes, and prostitutes). They lived near the slaughter houses, under bridges, on marshy lands unfit for cultivation, around the bushes, and at the foot of the hills. Clients approached them in their living places for prostitution. In the case of three girls in urban Tamil Nadu, they lived in well constructed houses. However, Ramanie was a 'call girl' who functioned in a hotel whenever her agent fixed up a client for her. Sulochana is a 'street walker' who generally stands at the roadside in a busy street, negotiates the aspect of

payment, etc., and carries on prostitution in the client's car or conveyance. Ruckmini is an 'escort girl'. She works in a firm. She accepts the invitations of 'businessmen' arranged by the firm authorities. This includes visits to foreign countries for 'conferences'. Thus, today's prostitutes under various typologies of prostitution, function within numerous settings.

However, to understand the brothel life of the Indian prostitutes, a clarification of terminologies such as prostitution, prostitute, brothel, brothel-keeping is necessary. As Governments world-wide handle prostitution through legal measures, a legal interpretation or understanding of these terms is presented below:

7.2 PROSTITUTION/PROSTITUTE/BROTHEL/BROTHEL-KEEPING

Mention has been made in Chapter 1 of the approach to prostitution adopted by India as the tolerationist approach. The Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, 1956 (SITA, 1956) further amended as PITA, 1986, is in force. It embodies the tolerationist spirit. Seema Midha (1992:3-5) clarifies:

The law does not prohibit prostitution as such...It is allowed to exist under certain restrictions. It is prohibited in, or in the vicinity of, public places but permitted in certain licensed areas. A prostitute, as long as she is above 18 years and solicits peacefully and voluntarily and keeps her activity outside the vicinity of public places and notified areas, is not punishable under the law.

It can be observed, that this law is in keeping with the holistic approach to man-in-society that takes into consideration the desires of man such as artha or wealth and karma that includes the sexual dimension (see Chapter 3). Man's involvement in the dual institutions of marriage and prostitution is tolerated. It does not prohibit prostitution per se but penalizes the prostitutes under certain clauses (see Chapter 1).

The understanding of prostitution is as follows:

The act of a female who offers her body for promiscuous sexual intercourse for hire, whether in money or in kind, and whether offered immediately or otherwise, and the

expression prostitute shall be construed accordingly.... Prostitution means 'the sexual exploitation or abuse of persons for commercial purposes.' Thus prostitution is not confined to the act of a female offering her body for hire, but includes sexual exploitation or abuse of a male or a child for commercial purposes. In the new definition the emphasis has shifted from a mere act which goes against societal norms to a more serious criminal offence of sexual exploitation and sexual cause.

According to the above understanding the definition of brothel and the punishment for keeping a brothel are as follows:

Any house, room, conveyance or place or any portion of any house, room or place which is used for the purpose of exploitation or abuse for the gain of another person or for the mutual gain of two or more prostitutes.

Sections 3 to 6 of the Act (see Seema, 1992) provide punishment for brothel-keeping and assisting in the keeping or management of a brothel with imprisonment and a fine. Owners of premises, or tenants and persons in occupation of premises used as brothels, are liable for punishment with imprisonment and fines.

Having clarified the terminologies related to this chapter, words (exploitation, sale) that occur in this chapter are defined below:

The Concise Oxford Dictionary -- New Seventh Edition (1983) defines exploitation as 'to utilize person or persons for one's own ends' and sale 'the exchange of a commodity for money'. In reference to this study sexual exploitation is considered as utilizing a person or persons sexually for one's own end; and sale or the exchange of commodity for money as the exchange of sex as a commodity for money (in prostitution). The following illustration focuses on the brothel organization to indicate persons involved, their interaction and the dynamics of caste and violence in the life-histories of prostitutes.

7.2.1 Brothel organization (with special reference to Bombay)

In relation to the brothels in the red light areas of Bombay, a 'proprietor' is said to be a person who owns the huge building and hundreds of persons purchased for

prostitution. The proprietors are mostly men. There are many eunuchs and a few women who are also called proprietors. Among people purchased for prostitution, most of them are women and girls and a few boys. The 'seths' are rich men who buy women and girls numbering 200 in a group like the proprietors but do not own the brothels. Often they take the brothels on rent.

The people purchased are placed under the care of eunuchs (in women's clothes) and women who were in prostitution before. These people see to the management of the brothel and provide day-to-day accounts to the proprietors and seths who generally live far away from their brothel. These eunuchs and women (brothel-keepers) are paid for their services. Personnel such as hired musclemen and cash collectors are generally provided to assist the brothel-keepers.

The brothel-keepers are empowered to keep the women and girls purchased under control. Non-conformity to their orders can lead to severe punishment. A person who frequents brothels described the treatment meted out by the eunuchs for non-conformity as disastrous (punching with fists, catching the hair, pushing them to the floor, kicking, etc.). An experience of this sort in a brothel makes the prostitutes obey the brothel-keepers without questioning. During my visit to a brothel in Bombay, Inbakani (a Scheduled Caste girl) came to us with her head covered. To anyone watching her it was like reciting some prayer. Besides, covering her head to some extent hides the face of the girl from behind.

Case history 21

Inbakani states:

Please apply some medicine and pray for me. [She then said in whisper] See the cuts on my leg! I tried to run away and this is what the brothel-keepers did to me. They cut my legs with sharp knife and told me to be careful and not try these tactics any more, lest some drastic measures would be adopted by them.

Treatment for Inbakani's leg that was blue black continued. However, the brothel-keepers who are generally accountable to the proprietors and the Seths continue to exercise various methods to instill fear among the prostitutes and to keep them inside the brothels. Generally, the prostitutes in a brothel are expected to follow a timetable. Shanti from a brothel in Bombay Central speaks of the schedule in her brothel.

Case history 22

Having gone to bed late at night, we get-up late in the morning. By then all customers have left the place. We have to clean the brothel and carry out the chores given to each of us by the Gharwalli (brothel-keeper). After the chores are over (i.e., in the afternoon) we are free to purchase coffee or snacks with the money clients give sometimes. This time the vendors who are approved by the brothel-keepers are allowed to enter brothels. By 4 p.m. all of us are expected to be ready to receive the clients. Till the early hours of morning we are expected to be available to the clients if called upon to do so. However, the money paid by the client is generally collected by the brothel-keeper or the cashier appointed by the proprietor and seth. After the serving of the only meal of the day in the early hours of the morning, we go to bed. This meal is generally cooked in the brothel.

Shanti's description of the day's schedule indicates that only one meal is served. Those who get money from clients will have the opportunity to help themselves. The rest have to bear their hunger and work. This raises the question as to who are those who get cash from the clients.

Case history 23

Lakshmi is in her twenties and comes from the Upper Castes. She states:

This house is built by the politicians. We have light and water facilities. I have my mother, two sisters and two children. We belong to the Upper Castes from Andhra Pradesh. It is a long time since we settled down in Karnata. We are maintained by the politicians.

Although India has enforced regulations regarding prostitution and prostitutes, not all the states follow. Police (in one of the southern states) declare that they are helpless as

some politicians allow prostitution and others do not. Those who allow prostitution put up big constructions with all facilities for the Upper Caste women and girls who fulfill their function as 'prostitutes' when the politician demands. In the case of Sheetal it is the doctor.

Case history 24

Sheetal, a Nepali girl, interviewed in an institution in Bombay. She smiles generously. All her teeth are gold plated. Sheetal states :

One of my clients is a dentist. He saw that my front teeth were not O.K. He did the covering (both the upper and the lower sets with gold covering) for free.

The presence of Nepalis in Bombay brothels is not welcomed by the Upper Caste/Class brothel-keepers. The Upper Caste/Class clientele get divided, some going to the Upper Caste/Class brothels and others to the Nepalis. There is often friction between those maintained by the Upper Caste/Class and the Nepalis. The Upper Caste/Class brothel-keepers are not happy about the presence of Nepali prostitutes in India. They ask angrily, 'Have the Nepalis no place to carry on prostitution in their country?'

There is the involvement of lawyers in prostitution as well. This is evident in the case history 9 of Suguna. Venkatamma (case history 26) states that she is a Devadasi. I interviewed her in North Karnataka near Raichur. She states that the police take advantage of her situation in a far away place where she works in a field. Whenever the policeman asks for sexual service she has to oblige. Otherwise he threatens to arrest her and drag her to the police station.

The above case histories indicate that proprietors, seths, brokers, uncles, brothel-keepers, gharwallis, eunuchs, lawyers, doctors, politicians, police, and even teachers are exploiting women and girls through prostitution. However, there is one difference: there is evidence of prostitutes of the Upper Castes being treated with care and concern. The following case histories of Rajeshwari and Sunanda (from Upper Caste and Scheduled Caste

backgrounds) illustrate this discrimination based on culture and violence in their lives, in particular in the life of Sunanda.

7.3 BROTHEL STRUCTURE/CLASSIFICATION OF PROSTITUTES/

DISCRIMINATION IN BROTHELS BASED ON CASTE

Case history 29

Rajeshwari, an Upper Caste teenager, interviewed in 1988.

I come from East Andhra Pradesh. After I grew-up my parents were keen on getting me married. My parents fixed a boy for me and informed me of the forthcoming marriage. I did not agree to this marriage as I loved a boy from our neighbourhood. Although I loved this boy, I had not communicated with him as in keeping with our culture we never communicated with boys except with those who visited our home. So I was not certain whether the boy loved me and was prepared to marry me. Due to this uncertainty, I could not explain my situation to my parents. However, my parents clearly stated that I ought to marry the boy of their choice. In a heated discussion that followed, I left my home in anger.

It was only after a long time, when I began to get tired that I realized that I had come a long way from my town. The road was long. I had no idea as to my whereabouts. I looked around. On that lonely road there were two men. I approached the nearest man and made enquiries about the place. He seemed surprised. He made enquiries about my background and offered to help me out. As I had brought nothing from my home, I was wholly dependent on him for my needs. He brought me to Bombay and reaching a place (respondent used a bad word for him) left me in that place which I soon came to know was a brothel.

The brothel had a common room at the entrance. At the extreme end of this hall there were two doors one to the right and the other to the left. When a girl is brought in she is welcomed in the common room and soon assessed by the brothel-keeper and sent to the room on the right or the left. I came to know that the girls in my section are for the Upper Caste/ Class clients. The procurer who brings in the girls for this section receives a high price. The economically poor, the low caste, and the Scheduled Caste are sent to the other section and we are forbidden to go there.

On hearing that it was a brothel I cursed, struggled, resisted and looked for a way to escape. As we are well guarded, there was no way out. We were provided with good food and water supply. The clients paid the money directly to the gharwalli. This amount went towards the cash borrowed to purchase us, towards the interest of that amount and for our maintenance we were told. However, the cash and gifts given to us by the clients can be used for our personal needs, such as for saris and jewellery. This gold nose ring (with precious gems) was bought from the jeweller who visits our section. The sari sellers, the jewellers, the money-lenders, the food suppliers are all known to the gharwallis and have fixed times to enter our section of the brothel. This nose ring was bought from the jeweller on installment

basis. Whatever may be the gain, what a wretched life this is! I will surely take revenge on the gharwalli for ruining my life.

Classification of prostitutes existed in the past among prostitutes in India. However, the cultural background of prostitutes in relation to caste had not been provided. The life-history of Rajeshwari (presented above) indicates that hierarchy exists among prostitutes in India based on caste. There are problems based on culture not only within the institution of prostitution ('internal'), but also outside with the family and society ('external'), and in Rajeshwari's case, prior to leaving her home, and after her entry, of not going home.

7.4 THE 'INTERNAL' RELATIONSHIP AND THE 'EXTERNAL'

RELATIONSHIP RESULTS IN THE EXPERIENCE OF CULTURE AND VIOLENCE

Women and girls purchased for prostitution are forced into prostitution sooner or later. Both at the time of recruitment and before or at the time of initiation, the women and girls struggle to get out. Some of them commit suicide as well. However, the treatment meted out to them inside the brothels varies in keeping with the caste factor. A comparison between the case history of Rajeshwari and Sunanda will illustrate this.

7.4.1 The lower the cultural status, the greater the violence inflicted on them

Case history 30

Sunanda is a teenager belonging to the Scheduled Caste interviewed in Bombay in 1988.

I have only a mother. She worked as a domestic servant. She went round to several neighbouring houses, washed utensils, clothes, etc. and brought home some food or grains, or any other articles she was given. While my mother was away, I spent my

time in play. I come from an area with very little facilities such as water supply, transport and school. If a mother has only one child and has no one to take care at home, she generally takes the child with her to work. Often babes are allowed. But not children of school going age. So my mother could not take me and I spent my time playing with the neighbouring children.

After I grew up my mother began to worry about me. She felt anxious about leaving me alone at home and going to work. At this age people at the work place allow the big girls in as they can get some extra work done by them for the same salary. I began helping my mother in her hard work. In one of the houses where my mother worked there was a lady visitor from Bombay. She showed an interest in our family. She said that there were plenty of job opportunities in Bombay. She could settle a job for me with accommodation and Rs. 100 would be sent to my mother regularly from my payment. My mother considered this a good opportunity. She thought that I could be safe in my work place and the Rs.100 that would be sent to her regularly could be saved for my marriage. After expressing my consent to my mother, I accompanied the lady to Bombay.

[Sunanda must have been a beautiful girl before entry into prostitution . Now she is completely disfigured with sores from head to foot. She wears a thin cheap cotton sari that is soiled with pus and blood, and sticks to her body. Her hair is not combed. Some of her hair has stuck to her body.]

In the brothel whether ill or well numerous clients are forced on me. The clients abuse me in various ways. Some of the clients are drunk, some suffer from mental illness. There are others who are violent or demand perversions. There is no escape from the diseases nor from the brothel.

[Sunanda remains in deep silence. She is thin, and might have contracted tuberculosis. For the Scheduled Caste prostitutes do not get wealthy clients. The clients who come to them might not give. No cash from clients results in inability to buy food or some basic needs such as clothing. The food provided in the brothel seems insufficient. Thus hunger and disease have made her life span short. The experience of Sunanda is one of the extreme forms of violence and injustice. The question of whether Rs.100 was regularly sent to her mother did not arise. For there is very little chance of Sunanda reaching home, and getting married. Besides, as case histories of prostitutes reveal, often such promises are made at the time of recruitment to get the girl. But once the girl is in their clutches these promises are seldom or never carried out.]

Thus the life-histories of Rajeshwari and Sunanda provide an insight into the discrimination meted to the Upper Caste and the Scheduled Caste prostitutes in India. This situation highlights the fact that the lower the cultural status the greater the violence inflicted on them. The experience of the Scheduled Caste prostitutes of this study has been one of greater violence within the institution of prostitution.

An analysis of the situation of greater violence of the Scheduled Castes indicates that the clientele of these women and girls generally come from the economically poorer section of society. The gharwalli (in order to pay back the money borrowed for purchasing the women and girls) wants to pay back the amount with interest as early as possible. So she sends many clients (whether drunk, diseased or mentally ill) daily to get more and more money. This results in the girls' health breaking down fast. This situation reaches a crisis proportion in the earlier stages when the brothel-keeper announces new women or girls. For the rates demanded are higher (about five times) than the routine rate of the particular brothel. The demands of the various clients (generally perversions) and violence exercised on them soon reduces them to the state of Sunanda, i.e. they are left with a short span of life (see Chapter 8 for their destiny).

7.4.2 Denial of motherhood and right over the child

Case history 23

Sumathi, an adolescent girl interviewed in 1988 speaks of her experience:

I was feeling sick for several days. I began vomiting too. I realized that I was pregnant. The brothel-keeper, despite knowing of my situation, was forcing clients on me. I was getting into an advanced stage of pregnancy. One day the gharwalli called me to her room. Generally, she does not allow any women or girls to enter her room (except her assistant). Once inside her room, she told me to sit on the floor. She brought some herbals, etc. and forced me to eat and drink. I asked her for what these things were. The gharwalli said that it would be good for me. I was suspicious and refused to take it. I wanted my child. I thought it might harm my child. She would not leave me till I finished taking the medicine. Before leaving she said that if I felt sick I should call her. That night I lost my child.

Several women and girls in prostitution had told me of brothel-keepers forcing them into prostitution in their advanced stage of pregnancy. One of them had to be admitted to the maternity ward early for delivery. Some girls were brought in after abortions as well, and their health broke down due to induced abortions.

In some of the brothels women and girls are allowed to go through pregnancy. (This generally happens in the early phase of a prostitute's life.) However, the child born to them (as indicated in Chapter 2) is taken away by the brothel-keepers as their 'own', illegally depriving the mother of her infant (see case history 28).

Case history 28

Ruckmani is in her early twenties. She is an expectant mother in an oppressive brothel in Bombay in 1988. She states:

I do not know what is going to happen to my child. My time for delivery is fast approaching. In brothels children do not belong to their mothers. The brothel-keeper and organizers take control of the children. They even take away our children as their own. Even if the child is crying the mother has to leave the child and attend to the client. We are kept here for their gain. They transfer us to other brothels that belong to them. In this process the mother and the child get separated.

This incident was related in Chapter 2 in connection with my visit to a brothel owner who was an eunuch. He had stated with joy that he had got his daughter married. Most of the eunuchs I have come across are forcefully castrated by other organizers of prostitution. A study on the eunuch in India is needed for a better understanding of the phenomenon of prostitution in India. The above incident indicates that they (generally castrated when young) feel the need to have their 'own' children. However, they deprive the mothers in prostitution of their own children

In some of the brothels, as some of the prostitutes have shared, going through pregnancy, delivery, child care, means great expense. The woman concerned is told of the

big amount the gharwalli had to spend. This entails the woman having to accept more and more clients to pay off her further debt. This in turn tells on her health.

7.4.3 Procurers, jewellers, sari sellers, money lenders, liquor sellers, food suppliers, transport personnel and hired men in the brothel setting

It was evident in Rajeshwari's case history (mentioned above), that the jewellers had their time to come to their enclosure. Besides, under the brothel schedule the time when these persons can enter the brothels was also stated. However, with regard to their relationship within the brothel setting, one of my significant observations is of silence within most brothels. Some of the women and girls who functioned as call-girls, escort girls, and cabaret artists spoke. But in the red light areas especially, all of them were expected to be silent. It was only 'business'. No talking with the clients. However, the Upper Caste women and girls could communicate. They were even permitted to build up relationships. Generally, some of them end up as concubines (see destiny, Chapter 8). At this point, however, the nexus of relationship between the Upper Caste/Class clients and the Upper Caste/Class prostitutes is illustrated below.

7.5 THE NEXUS BETWEEN THE UPPER CASTE/CLASS CLIENTS AND THE UPPER CASTE/CLASS PROSTITUTES

7.5.1 Supply of women and girls for Upper Caste/Class clients

The Upper Caste/Class clients who desire women and girls for prostitution generally look for the aspect of pleasure, but also the prevention of venereal disease. They demand (as most of the girls in my study were deflowered at puberty) virgins. As virginity is valued in Indian society, and a non-virgin usually has very little chance of marriage (see Chapter 3), they are highly priced by traffickers. These virgins are beyond the means of the poor,

especially the Scheduled Castes. The Upper Caste/Class clients have the means and demand virgins. Thus there exists an hierarchy among the clientele as well. The following discussion focuses on the relationship between the Upper Caste/Class prostitutes and clientele, and will be followed up with hierarchy among clientele.

The Upper Caste/Class prostitutes who are involved in prostitution (generally forced into it), are cut off from their families ('external' relationship). For they are considered as 'polluted' and ostracized. In prostitution these women attempt to build up relationships with the Upper Caste/Class men. As marriage is unthinkable, their relationship with the Upper Caste/Class men meets their sexual requirements. However, through the supply of virgins (demand of the Upper Caste/Class) they build up relationships. Thus, one of the findings of this study is the collaboration of the Upper Caste/Class men (mostly the clients) and the Upper Caste/Class women (mostly those in prostitution) through which the institution of prostitution is maintained.

7.5.2 Hierarchy among clientele and various brothel settings

Case history 32

15-year-old Shyamala comes from a Scheduled Caste background and was interviewed by me in Bombay in 1989.

My father died of tuberculosis. My mother had to work hard for the upkeep of both of us. When my mother was seriously ill, my aunt came home and looked after her. I came to know later that my mother died of cancer. On the day my mother died, shortly after the funeral rituals, my aunt took me by the arm and said 'let's go home'. I followed her. Once in my aunt's house, she cooked food and offered it to me. I remained in my aunt's house, carried out all the work assigned to me and ate the food offered to me.

Life in my aunt's house was getting harder and harder. More and more work was piled on me and the food offered me was insufficient. I experienced hunger but did not tell her as I had no one else to go to if my aunt refused a place and food. But, when I grew up I could no longer bear the hunger. One day after a discussion related to insufficient food being offered to me, I left my aunt's house to look for a job and earn my living.

I walked through the streets of Calcutta, and looked for a person whom I could ask for a job. There were many passing by but they were in a hurry. There

were a few boys standing by but I was not inclined to talk to them. On reaching the railway station I looked around and found an old man seated near the wall. I approached him and enquired whether a job was available. The old man stated that he had a relative in a distant place (Bombay) who was in need of a helper. If I wished to take up that job he was prepared to take me to Bombay to his relative's place, where I could have a job and a place to stay. He told me to get the permission of my family. I told him the details of my background. He took me to his house, gave me a set of clothes (sari) and colourful bangles for my hands. After a wash and change, I had food. We then left for Bombay.

On reaching Bombay he took me to the house of his 'relative'. (I came to know that I was sold to the women -- an Upper Caste/Class brothel-keeper). In this private place I was raped by an Upper Caste/Class man. After he had sexually exploited me for a week, one day I found the door of the room slightly open. I ran to the door. A Gujarati man was at the door. After listening to my woes he said he would come and pick me up and to be ready. I waited for the Gujarati man, and escaped with him from that place.

The Gujarati man was an Upper Caste/Class man like the first man [generally referred to as a 'patron' who pays a huge sum, deflowers the girl and uses her for some days]. The wife of the Gujarati man was cold and aloof and so I could not tell her my life experience. The Gujarati man took me to a hotel and traded me. Many clients, not as rich as the first man, were sent to me. One day -- a Sunday, five clients were sent together to me. See the marks on my body [shows the scars on the hand, her neck]. One day the Gujarati man said that he was taking me to a nice place this time. So I was happy to leave that hotel and accompany him.

He brought me to a brothel in East Bombay and sold me to a brothel-keeper. My refusal, as in other places, was only met with violence. The brothel-keeper caught hold of my head and dashed it against the wall. See the mark on my forehead [Shyamala shows the scar on her forehead] for not co-operating to cater to the many clients she sends me. Now my health is ruined. I have venereal disease. There is no way of getting treated. One of the girls in the brothel has jaundice.

7.5.3 Collaboration of men in creating prostitutes/rejects in Indian society

The above case history of Shyamala indicates the hierarchy among the clientele. The Upper Caste/Class man is the first to deflower her and uses her for several days. Then come several men, who also belong to the culturally Upper Caste/Class but economically of lower status than that of the patron, in a hotel (a semi-private place). After they make her a prostitute she is passed on as a reject to the public brothel in the red light area for the clientele of the casteless, those outside caste, for the Scheduled Castes, etc. To the onlookers the phenomenon of prostitution is for the poor, the culturally low, who are considered as the 'impure', the 'morally low', etc. To the labour leaders who do not want to

extend privileges and recruit labourers in the unorganized sector, and to those concerned about the sexual needs of the labourers who are away from home, the red light areas are perceived as an alternative at low cost!

7.6 WOMEN EXPLOITING WOMEN/THE ROLE OF CASTE WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION IN THE INDIAN SOCIETY

The Upper Caste/Class women's inability to return home, and their stay in the prostitution world, forms an important factor in the continuation of prostitution in India. The Scheduled Caste women and girls are not only exploited but die young as well. The aspect of women exploiting women needs to be dealt with (i.e., solidarity among women in India) if the exploitation of women by men is to be addressed effectively.

7.7 TARDY IMPLEMENTATION OF LAW

Although the law relating to prostitution is targeted against trafficking, and prohibits brothel keeping, D'Cunha (1991) points out that only 611 brothels and hotels have been raided between 1981 and 1987. A total of 596 brothel-keepers were arrested from 1981 to 1987. This in a city where over 50,000 brothels are said to exist. While clients are not affected by the law, 3,564 and 5,676 prostitutes were arrested under SITA, 1956, between 1980 and 1984, and 53,866 prostitutes under the Bombay Police Act (110b) from 1980 to 1987.

Chapter 8 illustrates the destiny of prostitutes in India.

CHAPTER 8

DESTINY

8.1. INTRODUCTION

The word 'destiny' is described by the people of India in many ways. One such description is the use of words such as 'thalaividhi' or 'thaleyezuthu' (what is preordained or written on the forehead, thalai or thala, meaning 'head'); what is written or preordained on one's head or person to happen from all eternity will happen. Man has no say in the matter, no one is responsible. It is inevitable, unalterable and controlled by a 'super power' beyond man's comprehension. To those who believe in God, it is considered as ordained by God or God's will.

The use of the word destiny is expressed by some people as 'fate' or 'kismet'. These words have a connotation of luck or disaster that attributes experiences and events in life as magical events that take place bringing fortune or misfortune in one's life, the origin of which cannot be traced a misery undeserved or a luck unexpected, due to a mystery beyond human comprehension.

Destiny is also described by many as a point marking an end of one's journey or race. A looking forward to the future, towards attainment of a goal or an achievement of one's desired end, striven for through a systematic approach (such as the holistic approach discussed in Chapter 3). The following of a plan or a blue print drawn up by spiritual masters or sages of old, who had relished the celestial music or experienced the ecstatic joy of the liberated (heaven or God experience) and lived in harmony in the universe that embraces the past, the present and the future (the Eternal). Destiny, according to those who follow this blue print, means a way of life with a reward, or a punishment in the next

life, resulting in a future better or worse life that includes aspects such as a higher or lower social status, with consequent privileges or disadvantages associated with it than his or her present life. In this perspective, to be born in an Upper Caste or as a Scheduled Caste is one's own making, and the experience of power accrued from high cultural, economic and political institutions are considered as a reward for past deeds, and the low cultural-economic and political power, with the violence experienced, as the punishment for the past life. In this light to be born a Scheduled Caste, to be a prostitute, and the experience of violence is considered as one's own making. It is believed that if endured without murmuring there is the hope of a better future life as a reward in the next life.

According to the above life is not lived in the present, a situation that can be created by us, a situation that needs a response here and now, but as related to the past (as a desert for past deeds), and with the future (with a hope that things will be better in the future/next life). The believers of the theory of karma, a life lived through the four stages or ashramas (see Chapter 3) with Shrama or exertion, guarantees Moksha (heaven or a liberated life) that is said to overcome not only life but death as well. But this it offers after rebirths which will take aeons of years.

Destiny among the Indians who profess Christianity, is believed to rest on the present life alone. The Moksha or heaven has already being prepared for all those who believe in Jesus. This belief involves the love of God and one's neighbour. The fulfillment of the commandment of love incorporates responding to the situation of oppression, exploitation and violence here and now.

However, there is a trend of thought among a few, who do not believe in the past, future, or on following a blue print or a set path (or marga) in one's life. The background of these people indicates that they are non-believers in the Eternal or God, and consider human beings as originated from the animal world, destined to perish and disappear. Prosperity and deprivation according to them are one's own making. One's destiny is in one's own hands,

within his or her power. They consider the situation of the deprived as due to economic factors that deprives them of facilities, comforts, economic power for their upliftment. While various understandings of destiny exist in India, I believe that a human being is a unique, dynamic person of body, mind (intellect) and spirit (soul), created by God, with the potential that is fully immeasurable and, as possessors of life that is imperishable, are destined to live for ever. Moksha is a liberated state of the total person.

However, as social beings, destiny in this life is shaped not only through one's own initiative but by the initiatives taken by others that are generally expressed through the ethico-cultural norms, and economic and political system that regulate human life in society. One's own destiny then is very much an individual's making, but the social milieu in which he or she lives can either facilitate or hinder the person's efforts. In this perspective, the lives of prostitutes of this study indicate that they wanted to live, they looked for liberation from systems that confined them to unemployment and starvation. Some wanted to free themselves from traditions and customs that kept women bound to forced marriages, from polygamous lives of their husbands, and dehumanizing attitudes and practices in society. They did take the initiative to look for better pastures where they could find opportunity for work, earn and to live a more satisfactory life. But what is their experience at this fourth phase of their life-history? How do they perceive their destiny?

This chapter, through the analysis of the case histories of prostitutes, exposes the web of relationships between culture-violence-power, and argues that the existing modalities of power in prostitution tend to use culture to mystify and mask violence. As such, a change in destiny for women in prostitution by themselves is extremely difficult. If a change should take effect, besides institutional reforms, a deeper shift in thinking, feelings towards women in prostitution, a thorough exposure, empathy and transformation of outlook, that evokes a sense of care, need to be created. This could facilitate the struggle

for a society that is free from objectification and commodification, sexual exploitation and abuse, culture and violence of women and girls in India.

While the attitude to life and destiny varies in the Indian situation (as stated above), the response to the situation of prostitutes in India likewise varies. This is evident in the perception of prostitutes' situation in India as an urgent issue, or resulting in toleration and passivity. While these variations and responses continue, what is the situation of prostitutes at this phase?

8.2 DESTINY OR THE FOURTH PHASE OF A PROSTITUTE'S LIFE

CLARIFIED

Chapters 5 and 6 on recruitment and initiation indicated that these are generally carried out when the prostitutes are young. In the situation of 'sacred' prostitutes and the 'singing and dancing girls' there existed a long span of several years between their birth or time of dedication and initiation into prostitution. However, in the situation of trafficking through deceit, fraud, kidnap (trafficking by procurers), the initiation into prostitution took place shortly after the sale and purchase transactions. (For instance, in places such as the meeting place of three States (Dholpur, Rajasthan, North India; Agra, Uttar Pradesh, North India; and Morena, Madhya Pradesh, North India) they sell and resell the women and girls who are kidnapped, abducted or deceived, in quick succession and force them into prostitution.)

However, 'destiny' in the life of a prostitute in India refers to the fourth phase (after being recruited, initiated and involved in brothel-life) in which the clutches on the prostitute by the organizers is relaxed or completely severed through pushing the prostitutes out on the street, or if still under the organizers' clutches, severed by the rescue operation of the police.

In the situation of the 'sacred' prostitutes and the 'singing and dancing girls' the prostitutes find that the clients have decreased or do not demand their services any more. Or due to various factors such as health reasons, the prostitutes may voluntarily give up or function as concubines and mistresses. The phase is somewhat like the 'retirement' phase, but not based on age. For those involved in prostitution can come to the end of their prostitute life even as young teenage girls (after rescue). Involvement in prostitution takes place from the pre-pubertal stage (as my studies reveal). However, whether married or unmarried, trafficked or lured, at the time of initiation into prostitution, all except one prostitute among 1,100 of the remote study, and all 92 prostitutes of the proximate study were below 30 years. The age range of those who are kept under control is generally between 11 and 35 years. However, it is not the same prostitutes who were introduced at 11 that remain until 35. For the life-span of prostitutes is short. Those introduced at 11 might not survive after 20, and those introduced after 20 might not live to see their thirties. And only one was introduced after 30. She may be in demand for a short time as the demands of clients are mostly for the young, and the elder women are considered as infected with disease and avoided. Thus the fourth phase of prostitutes is not based on their age, but the period after they are rejected by the brothel-keepers, unwanted by clients, rescued by the police, or decide on their own (for reasons of health such as cancer, advanced tuberculosis, leprosy, and/or venereal diseases) to discontinue prostitution. The oldest prostitute of this fourth phase (Deepa) interviewed was around 50 years old. The following case history indicates that she is unable to count as she cannot remember if she attended school. She is unable to estimate her age. Most prostitutes (with the exception of a few in clandestine forms of prostitution who select their clients and get medical treatment) have a short life span. Deepa, a 'sacred' prostitute in the fourth phase, who comes from a Scheduled Caste, interviewed in South India in 1987, shares her experiences.

One day when I was a little girl playing in the open field, my mother came to me, caught hold of my hand and said 'Come on, it's time to go to the temple'. She took me home fast and after getting ready we went to the temple. I do not know my age as I do not know how to count. I cannot remember if I ever went to school. All these years I have been in the temple.

My work began early in the morning before sunrise. I had to prepare the place for the morning rituals. The work during the day depended on the rituals that would be carried out during that particular day. For rituals at different seasons were not the same. For instance, during the wedding season of the gods there is heavy work. For the temple of the god and the goddess are not the same, they are far apart. We had to go to the goddess' temple with all the things pertaining to a wedding i.e., all the requirements of a wedding that takes place in society. This entailed several trips carrying trays of flowers, fruits, sweets, coconuts, betel leaves, necessary things for the ritual etc. All the time the musicians and drummers would lead the procession. Some of us in the temple ('sacred' prostitutes) followed them with trays and assisted in the wedding ceremony. My last duty daily was to put the god to bed before the temple door closed.

Generally, we had to respond to clients who came to the temple and were prepared to pay. See my 'thali' (shows the string around her neck, a solid one, somewhat similar to the 'mangalsutra' worn by married women in that area). When I grew up the ceremony known as the 'pottukatudhal' was performed in the temple. I was married to the god, and had to carry on prostitution. The Brahmin of the temple was my regular client. He gave me a piece of land in my name. He is dead now. My parents have passed away. Only one of my relatives kept contact with me. This young man sometimes visited me. After he got married he came with his wife and invited me to come and live in his house. He had invited me several times earlier but I had declined. But this time I agreed and left the temple.

I did discuss with him about the deed of the land given by the Brahmin. We decided that the land should be sold and with that cash to build a house where my relative stays. Whatever cash I had I handed over as he was short of cash at times, and whenever my thumb impression on the documents were required I agreed to do so. Now the house is ready. [Looks up and shows me the ceiling, the stairs, etc.] It is a lovely house. But I discovered lately that this house of mine is in my relative's name. He has deceived me. If I ask for the house, it is not easy to get it back. I am unable to go to the court. I have no money. He is sure to win as I have put my thumb impression as a sign of consent. We have to face disagreement. Who is there for me to go to? My whole life has been a failure. I was cheated first and foremost by my parents. They gave me away to the temple. I thought I had to work as a servant in the temple doing whatever work they gave me. But I had to carry on prostitution when I grew up. I was forced to live that life by being told by my parents and people in the temple that I was dedicated for this life and if I did not carry it out I would incur the wrath of the god. The other 'sacred' prostitutes also carried on prostitution. The life of 'sacred' prostitutes involves prostitution I was told.

Today see my situation. I am as ignorant as ever and cheated by all. Is this life my making or by those around me? How could my parents do such a thing? They are dead and gone. Even that Brahmin had no scruples in exploiting me. Even the land given to me (which I did not ask for) was for the mean sale of sex. Did it turn out to be of any use? Today I stand alone, dependent on others, and my health

is ruined. This is my destiny imposed on me, a denial of letting me grow and live with dignity and joy, in freedom and love.

Deepa, born to grow and live with dignity and joy, in freedom and love, attributes her life to experience as the result of others' making, not her own. While those involved in making her so are obvious in the above case history, the analysis takes up the issue of land in the context of prostitution.

8.2.1 Culture-violence-power

The situation of the Scheduled Castes in India was discussed in relation to culture (conflicts based on the dominant culture, the cultureless, etc.), quoting Moffatt (1979). Regarding the power struggle between the Upper Castes (considered as Aryans and not natives of India) and the Scheduled Castes (considered as Dasyus and natives of India) Kananaikil (ed., 1983), and Bhagwan Das and Massey (1995) were quoted. It was emphasized that in relation to this study on the Scheduled Castes it is not culture or power theories, but a culture-power theory which has to be considered (see Chapter 3). A series of wars between these groups is evident in history, and today, despite the absence of battles, great hatred exists. This is evident in caste/class riots that often emerge in the Indian society. The contemporary dalit poems indicate their feelings towards their oppression by the dominant castes in India with poems cited in chapter 3. ('The Life we Live', translated by Gauri Deshpande, and 'It's Reddening On The Horizons', translated by P.S Nerurkar).

However, central to the issue of culture and power correlation is violence. The violence committed against the Scheduled Caste women and girls through sexual exploitation, is considered by the Upper Castes as bringing about greater hatred from the Scheduled Castes. To diffuse this hatred of the Scheduled Castes a modality (mode of action) involving the offer of land, in recompense for sexually exploiting the Scheduled Caste women and girls through prostitution, has been designed.

To the Scheduled Castes, who are accustomed to obey the commands and demands of the Upper Castes in their day to day life, the according of a piece of land is taken as benevolent act. The indebtedness of the Scheduled Castes to the benevolent act of the Upper Castes is reciprocated by the offer of a girl to the Upper Castes. Reciprocity is a cultural characteristic in the Indian culture. Even a small gift sent by a neighbour on festive days is immediately returned by a gift from the receiver. Returning an empty tray is an insult in some communities. The poorest will keep at least some bananas, betel leaves and nuts, before returning the tray. This gesture of giving a piece of land (a gift that could sustain life for generations) is returned with a great gift of their daughter to the landlords by the Scheduled Castes. Since women and girls in society are considered as the 'property' of men, being given as gifts, sold, buried alive, or killed is not unheard of (see Swami Dharma Theertha, 1992).

8.2.2 Culture mystifies and masks violence

Thus the exchange of gifts (of land and/or cash) for a girl results in maintaining better relationships between the cultural groups, the security of the gift of the Upper Caste land diffusing the anger of the Scheduled Castes for sexually exploiting their women and girls.

8.2.3 The web of culture-violence-power implicit in the system of 'sacred' prostitution

To ensure a steady flow of Scheduled Caste girls and easy access to their intimacy is made possible for the Upper Caste men in collaboration with the ritual performers as 'sacred' prostitutes in India. The ritual services in the temple are for a cash amount (which used to be generally Rs.100 but is anything between Rs.500 and Rs.800 today). A girl who is dedicated cannot get married. As such no Scheduled Caste man can marry her. Besides, at the time of initiation, no Scheduled Caste man would have a big cash amount to pay for the

initiation since the girl is offered to the highest bidder. Even if a Scheduled Caste man paid a big amount, an Upper Caste man could easily pay more than that amount and claim the girl. Besides, Scheduled Caste men coming forward to sexually exploit a Scheduled Caste girl by being a patron is very unlikely. Under these conditions it is generally the Upper Caste / Class men who become patrons. The amount paid for ritual goes to the temple and the performers of the rituals. The amount received by the girl's family today generally goes towards the celebration which is almost similar to a wedding involving a dinner and other expenses connected with it.

8.2.4 The dominant castes maintain power whilst the Scheduled Caste girl becomes a 'scape-goat' for violence

Since the Scheduled Caste violence is diffused, they do not complain about the sexual exploitation of 'sacred' prostitutes. The Upper Castes have a steady flow of girls through the system and the system continues undisturbed. As the Scheduled Castes are associated with prostitution as 'impure' persons, 'poor' society often remains unperturbed by their involvement in prostitution. The involvement of the Upper Castes remains mystified and they continue to be considered as 'pure' and 'morally upright' men.

8.2.5 Possible transformation in relation to 'sacred' prostitution in India

A change in the above situation can be brought about not by effectively stimulated reforms (such as socio-economic, and income generating programmes) alone, but requires a deeper shift in thinking and feelings towards 'sacred' prostitutes. This approach applies to prostitutes of all types of prostitution and can be brought about by exposure of culture and violence in the lives of prostitutes, empathy and transformation of outlook which can lead to a caring attitude towards them. The transformation of ideological approval on the part of

these cultural groups would be a great step in undoing exploitation through this system. A withdrawal of one or both the parties could resolve the situation.

However, one of the strategies adopted by a group with a multicultural background is presented below. While changes from within these cultural groups could be effective, a transformation could come from outside influences as well. The following programme carried out by a multicultural group (including Brahmins and Scheduled Castes) in which I was actively involved during the time of my research (1984 - 88) is presented below.

In all, 200 Bhasavis of Adoni in Andhra Pradesh formed the sample of my four year national study (1983 - 1986) related to 'Trafficking in Women and Children in India (1988)'. Through a gradual process of planning and contact with these Bhasavis a public gathering was arranged in 1986. Along with the Associate Director of one of the Women's Organizations I had gone to invite the government officials (such as the Director of the Revenue Department) to this gathering. The Bhasavis gathered in front of one of the local temples where they were dedicated. The gathering was planned in the evening hours (at dusk) so that most of the local people who go to work might be able to be present. By sunset thousands (mostly men) surrounded the Bhasavis, the few organizers and the chief guests assembled in front of the temple. One of the organizers (a Hindu man) welcomed the whole gathering. In his introductory talk he requested the Bhasavis to raise their heads (in control to a cultural tradition handed down to them for generations which necessitated that these women and girls keep their heads bent low with the face looking down on the ground as a mark of their 'low status' before others in society). Although this process took some time we decided to wait and gradually they began to raise their heads. There was no protest from the public surrounding us. Gradually the women did speak of their deprived conditions and their children's health and illiteracy.

At this point, I was invited to climb up to the ancient temple where the dedication of women and girls takes place and declare it open as a centre for social services where the

women and girls (Bhasavis and their children) would be taught health care, to read and write. After I carried out their request, a government official offered to extend site for houses where the Bhasavis could live. A cash amount of Rs.3000 was also promised to the Bhasavis who wished to get their daughters married. Some Non-Governmental Organizations offered to conduct socio-economic, health and literacy programmes. I received a reply in 1988 to my letter sent to a staff in the socio-economic programme in Adoni, stating that most of the women now live in their own houses. They seem to be busy with their buffaloes given for their economic development and seem to have forgotten prostitution at the moment.

It is possible that these Bhasavis were busy with the building of their huts or houses, and starting their socio-economic programme. This would have entailed numerous visits to the government office, and hard work. Besides, several organizations have been in touch with them in relation to their literacy, health programmes, etc. This would to some extent have kept them away from involvement in prostitution and the clients from venturing near them. However, to the Bhasavis who were in the fourth phase (destiny) this situation would be of great help as they would have a roof over their head, and to some extent a means of survival to live with dignity.

If transformation is to take place, the situation of Scheduled Caste women and girls in India today calls for assistance from all concerned individuals and groups.

8.3 DESTINY OR THE FOURTH PHASE IN RELATION TO 'SINGING AND DANCING GIRLS' PROSTITUTION

When young, the traditional singing and dancing girls functioning as prostitutes are generally instructed to be brief and 'businesslike' in their relationship with their clients. The clients are screened by the elders (kith and kin or the organizers of the music party, some of

whom belong to their own relatives). As this form of prostitution involves singing and dancing apart from sexual 'services', the clients are expected to pay more. Thus the screening of clients would involve their economic status. The aspect of violence would be reduced to some extent as persons who are drunk, under the influence of drugs, or mentally ill, once detected, could be avoided.

On the part of the clientele, those who go in for traditional singing and dancing girls, come from a particular section of the Indian society. These people not only come from the upper economic strata of the Indian society, but also may have an appreciation for singing and in dance. As there are many schools of dancing in India (such as Kathuk in the North, Bharatnatyam in South, Kathkalli in Kerala, Odissi dance in Orissa near Central India), clients who generally go to the traditional singing and dancing girls come particularly from North India. A dance such as Kathuk, for instance, was most popular during the time of the Moghal rulers and was performed in the Moghul courts. It had several patronizers among the Moghal nobles. This form of dance is considered as an entertainment even today, especially by the Muslims.

Although traditional singing and dancing girls with prostitution exist in Bombay, their extent and the clientele form a minority group in comparison to other forms of prostitution in urban areas. As the traditional singing and dancing girls get older, the rules imposed on the young are relaxed. They are inclined to have preferences in relation to clients. As the phase of dancing and singing decreases, they generally cater to some regular clients or take up concubinage to some rich men. Through the influence of one or more rich men, the talented singing and dancing prostitutes set up centres of training in the art of singing and dancing and get involved in giving performances in public places, such as hotels. Unlike the former 'sacred' prostitutes these singing and dancing girls do not go begging. However, like the children of the 'sacred' prostitutes, society marginalizes them, their children are not accepted for marriage. The stigma of being involved in prostitution extends

to the whole community, and they experience marginalization. Because of this attitude of society, with little or no education, with very little scope or employment, and no marriage prospects, they generally keep themselves aloof and continue to train their children in traditional forms of prostitution. Once they reach the fourth stage they generally remain with their kith and kin, or alone if they have no one, and die.

8.3.1 Future of the traditional 'singing and dancing girls' form of prostitution

In spite of all the expansion that has taken place in the formal educational system, the vast majority of Indian women have remained outside the reach of all education and are illiterate. Although some of the girls in the singing and dancing communities have begun to attend schools, their involvement is extremely low. The female literacy level among Scheduled Castes in North India where the singing and dancing form of prostitution exists, according to the Census Report, India, 1991, is discussed below:

8.3.2 Literacy rate of the Scheduled Castes

The literacy rate of the Scheduled Caste population has increased from 25.82% in 1981 to 37.21% in 1991 (excluding Assam and Jammu & Kashmir). It is, however, seen that the literacy rates for the States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan are much lower for the Scheduled Caste population than that for the general population. The female literacy rates among the Scheduled Caste population and total population respectively were 10.69% and 25.31% in Uttar Pradesh, 8.31% and 20.44% in Rajasthan and 7.07% and 22.89% in Bihar.

Thus this disability (illiteracy) of women and girls gives them very little scope for taking up jobs in which other educated women are employed. Besides, the gap that is built between this community and society could be bridged through means and communication, dialogue and assistance. For ages this community associated with traditional dancing and

singing and with prostitution remained marginalized and segregated. While the Government has the ability to provide the infrastructure for bringing about this transformation, there is plenty of scope for Non-Governmental Organizations, such as women's organizations, to enhance the development of these communities through educational, health and socio-economic programmes.

8.3.3 The cabaret artists

Although most of the cabaret artists interviewed by me spoke English and came from the Anglo-Indian community, their literacy level was low. With access to English Medium Schools they do begin their education, but when they come up to the secondary school level most of them discontinue. As their socializing pattern is different (as Lily illustrates in case history 33) they often discontinue and face a life long struggle in attempting to keep their social status in the environment in which they live. Lily who comes from an Anglo-Indian community, is now 30 years old and relates her experiences in life:

Case history 33

In our culture we have no restrictions in socializing with boys. Many boys from our neighbourhood come to our house, and we go to their houses as well. We can choose our own marital partners. We do not have the custom of the parents looking for a marital partner for us and settling our marriage. Generally, every one in our family and among our friends know one another's boy friends and girl friends. When a boy and a girl are ready for marriage they inform their parents and friends and get married.

My boyfriend was prepared to marry me. I was in the high school and so I was not prepared to marry him then. I wanted to complete my studies. But one day he raped me, and following this I had to discontinue my studies. I became pregnant and had to move out of my house to his. He had no proper job as he had no proper education and this brought in very little money. With the birth of my daughter expenses began to mount. There were debts to be paid. One of the neighbours who knew our family situation used to sympathize with our situation and proposed several alternatives to get over our difficulty. One such suggestion was that the Anglo-Indian girls were in demand as cabaret artists. This involved dancing only for a couple of hours in the night. Education was not important. I know the language and how to dance. So I soon got a job as a cabaret artist on a contract basis... I gradually got involved in prostitution and continued till I completed the contract.

Now I have neither the required education nor any skill to take up a job. I am faced with the same situation as before taking up cabaret. At least I was healthy then, and was not addicted to alcohol, smoking or taking of drugs. We are called upon as part of our contract to accompany rich clients. These clients include foreign tourists as well. Although the amount we receive through this programme is more, we encounter risks as well. For instance, I am told at the clinic that I have cancer. I contracted venereal disease through prostitution. So my health is really gone. At this [fourth phase] I am unable to take up any job. Prostitution has really ruined my life.

While the former classification of prostitution ('sacred' prostitution) is set within the socio-religious framework, this category of prostitution (cabaret) is set in the context of entertainment, tourism and under cultural heritage of the country. This modality through permitting the entertainment programmes in hotels, entertainment halls and night clubs, aims at the economic development of the country. However, its impact on women and girls through these programmes often remains unexplored and thus generally does not form a subject of concern. Sonia, a 27 year old woman (case history 34) from an Anglo-Indian community shares her life experiences:

Case history 34

I was functioning as a cabaret artist. But recently I gave up as one of the clients beat me up terribly after taking me to a hotel. The lives of some of the women are full of violence. They suffer from internal bleeding too. Coarse indigenous forms of condoms used by some of the tourists can be a terrible experience. Under some of the organizers of cabaret, escort services are included. As such the choice of clients does not rest on us. Until the contract is over we are to put up with all sorts of clients who can inflict violence. Some of the cabaret artists and escort girls give up their contract due to injury or internal bleeding. Some of them die prematurely.

This form of entertainment, that aims at the economic development of the country, permits subjugation and exploitation of women and girls who generally come from minority communities. The reason for the death of one of the respondents who belonged to this community, as recently conveyed to me, related to AIDS. Whilst the Anglo-Indian community who have the opportunity to go for medical check ups, get to know the nature of their illness (whether AIDS or not), and likewise seek medical aid, most of the women

and girls in prostitution, especially those under oppressive structures, have hardly any opportunity to avail of medical check ups and treatment. Thus the actual extent of AIDS, which must be high among those in prostitution in India, remains unknown.

8.3.4 Impact of venereal diseases/AIDS on the lives of prostitutes in India

In relation to AIDS the media did bring about awareness among the people. However, this presentation was more a sensationalized presentation of the disease than what was realistic or scientific. For no one (including the medical experts) knew what exactly they were fighting for at this period. For instance, the Guardian 10 December 1981, ran a news story entitled 'Mystery Disease kills gays'. In fact, in the United States the disease at the early stages became associated with the gays. With the discovery of the virus causing AIDS by the combined effort of the American oncologist Robert Gallo and the French scientist Luc Montagnier (April, 1984) people all over the world began to change the focus of their debate.

During the later part of the 1980s the focus continued to remain at the level of the virus (HTL V-111 or later named as human immunodeficiency virus, or HIV) the focus from the disease was politicized, for instance, targeting Africa under the Green Monkey Theory. Slogans such as 'lower the partners, lower the risk' began to emerge. AIDS was considered as a threat to humanity, and was taken up as a medical problem in the 80s, and in the 90s became very much linked to high risk groups. Prostitutes were considered as a high risk group.

In the Indian situation where prostitutes form a marginalized section, being associated with AIDS resulted in their further ostracism. Its association with the virus and association with sex and sexuality came later. The publicity of prostitutes as the source of venereal disease was linked to the Scheduled Castes who are generally associated with prostitution and considered 'impure'. Association of prostitution with immorality and sin

further pointed to the Scheduled castes as not only 'immoral' but also as 'sinners'. A section of society did consider AIDS as a punishment for sins under karma. Some attributed the illness to God. The God in whom the Christians believe, did not cause, but liberated people from illness, sin, bondage, dehumanization. Jesus stood on the side of those who suffered, the ostracized, the exploited. However, what was the impact of all the above on the lives of prostitutes? During field work I could hear the Indian brothel-keepers accusing Nepali prostitutes of having venereal diseases. The Indian brothel-keepers deny that they are the source of venereal diseases. However, judging from the life histories of prostitutes, most of them were virgins, with no association with the males, as well as no history of venereal diseases. They stated that they contracted STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) after being forced into prostitution. Sexual exploitation of women and children besides violating their basic human rights does make them vulnerable to infection and AIDS. Thus they cannot be labeled as the 'source' of venereal diseases. However, pointing to the Nepalis alone as having STDs indicates that the Indian prostitutes are free from STDs. This is contrary to what the respondents had stated and to what I observed. In relation to STDs and AIDS, Dr Gilada (Honorary Secretary, Indian Health Organization) and Dr Sarla Azad (Consultant Gynaecologist Bombay), state:

Women in prostitution in India are considered as the greatest risk for AIDS. Out of a total 150,000 samples of different high risk behaviour people in India for the AIDS antibodies test, 530 were found to have the AIDS infection and out of this 260 were women in prostitution... Women in prostitution are not referred to consultants, so their health is neglected... Due to social stigma, doctors and health workers refuse to visit red light areas or start health care projects there... One cannot control STDs in developing countries without controlling sex tours. Disease can be spread during the incubation period, even before the people know they have it themselves.

While agreeing with factors pointed out by Dr Gilada and Dr Sarla, what is the role of caste in this situation? The extent of AIDS among prostitutes does speak of the seriousness of the situation in relation to prostitutes in India on the one hand, and on the other, points to women in prostitution as not being referred to consultants. Who is not

referring whom? In the brothel set up this refers to brothel keepers who generally come from the Upper Caste/Class and the prostitutes mostly from the Scheduled Castes. Thus we find that most of those who suffer from STDs are the Scheduled Castes and as stated earlier they have no opportunity to avail themselves of the services extended by the Government. Besides, the fact that doctors and health workers refuse to visit red light areas or start health care projects there cannot be accepted. Going to the red light areas does to some extent affect reputations, however going to the red light areas to provide health services can be a noble cause that generally evokes people's admiration in the Indian society. Efficient planning and good management could curtail the aspect of affecting one's reputation. However, here again, in a red light area where mostly Scheduled Caste women and girls function as prostitutes and are affected with STDs, and the medical personnel, such as the doctors, come from the Upper Caste families, there exists a cultural factor. This, along with the prostitutes forming a high risk group for AIDS, seems to have an impact on the Upper Caste doctors in taking up health services in the red light areas. Knowing the serious situation in which the prostitutes are placed in regard to STDs and AIDS, instead of waiting till the cultural factors are resolved, Non-Governmental Organizations could get involved in extending health services to prostitutes in India. As Non-Governmental Organizations do suffer from financial strains, these organizations need to be encouraged and supported financially by the Government.

Since providing adequate health services involves overcoming hurdles such as ethical, economic, political and organizational factors, a holistic approach in extending health services through the network of the existing infrastructures (such as through primary health centres, mother and child care programmes, and family welfare centres) could reach out to the health needs of the public at a wider range. Health education of the public through the media needs to incorporate relevant, up-to-date information to the citizen by presenting information such as some of the national data bank details in relation to the

situation of venereal diseases and incidence of AIDS. A positive attitude towards health needs to be inculcated through holding debates on health care with documentary films on the wholesome intake on food, healthy livelihood, and personal responsibility towards one's development. The social dimension of health and civic rights could be carried out through citizen communities at local levels.

Taking the holistic approach, socio-economic programmes for further adult education, with opportunities of training in varied job oriented skills, and flexibility of time factors suited to the person's situation, self employment programmes with loans (capital) and with guidance in running a business that can bring in profit, will prove helpful, as preventative measures from being deceived and forced into prostitution.

8.4 DESTINY OR THE FOURTH PHASE IN RELATION TO PROSTITUTION IN RED LIGHT AREAS

An examination of the life-histories of prostitutes in red light areas indicates two major divisions: those who have left their home for cultural reasons and were on the look out for a job to maintain themselves and/or their families, and those who have left their homes for economic reasons, i.e. for a steady job and a higher income for their own livelihood and/or for other dependents. Both these groups at the time of entry had economic need as their uppermost crisis in life. However, unlike the popular conclusion that they enter prostitution for economic needs, most of these women and girls were trafficked and forced into prostitution (see Chapters 5, 6 & 7). The following case history deals with the fourth phase in Mahakshmi's life.

8.4.1 Cultural factors for the Upper Caste women and girls leaving their homes

Case history 35

Mahalakshmi is in her twenties and comes from an Upper Caste. She was interviewed in Bombay in 1988.

After my schooling my parents were planning to arrange marriage for me. In keeping with our custom it is their duty to find a suitable partner and get me married. As I was not engaged in any particular work at this time, I was sent to my uncle and aunt's place for a change. While I stayed in my uncle's house my father came to take me home as a marriage offer had come.

In keeping with our custom, the bridegroom's party (bridegroom and his kith and kin) came home on the appointed day. A traditional reception was given to them, all clarifications needed regarding the boy and girl, dowry and matters related to the wedding day were discussed and the bridegroom's party left. On our side, we had no hurdles (such as inability to pay the dowry). Shortly after this visit my family was informed that I was accepted as a bride and my parents communicated that we agreed to the marriage. The date for the marriage was fixed and the marriage took place.

On the wedding day, after the guests had all gone, a little child was seen clinging to the bridegroom. To one of the girl's people who enquired about the child, the bridegroom had said that it was his nephew. In India, in the joint family or extended family set up small children do get attached to uncles and aunts. This event was not taken seriously. However, while in my husband's home, I was shocked to know that he was a married man with wife and children.

8.4.2 Bigamy, polygamy, sexual excesses

Case history 35 (continued)

Those around me tried to explain that I was not a mistress but a wife since the marriage had taken place as per custom with the necessary rituals before the sacred fire. I soon informed my parents and requested them to take me home. In keeping with tradition a girl married off to a man belongs to her husband's home. A married girl in society is expected to be in her husband's house and not in her parents house. So my parents with great sorrow at what had taken place, despite society's criticism, took me home and thus my married life ended.

I realized that I was a burden to my family. They had brought me up, educated me and got me married. They had spent all the money to see that I was well settled in married life. I did not wish to make their life hard. I wanted to take up a job, and I heard through a friend that there was a job vacancy in Bombay. I informed my parents. They agreed as they wanted me to be independent as their life expectancy was short. A job would always be good. So I left for Bombay.

8.4.3 Double standards of morality challenged

Having been forced into prostitution, at this phase how can I go home? I who stood for monogamy and left my husband's home returning as a 'prostitute'? My parents took me home from my husband's house and they had to suffer so much from society for keeping me home. How can I tell them that I am here in this condition? Will they take me if they know I was a 'prostitute'? Will society leave us in peace? Yes, society permits double standard morality. It permits a man to have more than one wife. The man is not criticized, but the woman who refused to uphold double standards is criticized and has to suffer. Did I take up prostitution voluntarily? Will society believe that? There is no place not only for a prostitute, but even for a victim of prostitution!

(At the time of interview Mahalakshmi had not made any decision about her future except that of not returning home).

It is my observation that married women (often under pressure from husbands who function as 'pimps') get involved in clandestine prostitution. Some men involve their wife and children in prostitution. Although some of the people in the neighbourhood know of this situation they are not criticized. Their behaviour is even condoned. However, if a single women or girl is involved in prostitution (even if through force) they face society's bitter criticism and condemnation. Sexual lapses, bigamy, polygamy, exist today. Prostitutes question these double standards that prevail in society which make them leave their husband's home resulting in getting into a series of other problems.

8.4.4 Custom of seclusion of women and girls posing a barrier

Case history 36

Shakunthala is a 17 year old Upper Caste girl. She states:

I come from rural India. My parents never sent me alone anywhere. Whenever I had to go out someone accompanied me. According to our culture women or girls walking alone on the roads are considered as having low morals. Our families do not send us out alone.

A friend of our family sometimes visited us. She was an elderly person and walked straight into our house if she happened to pass by our house. There was no fixed time for a visit. But having come in she would enquire all the details about everyone in the house. She would give us lot of information about what was happening in our village. Some of this information was very interesting.

One day she came in when I was alone in the house. My parents had gone out and were expected late in the evening. She said that a very good new film was running in a nearby theatre. If I wished to see it she was prepared to take me. Not to worry about the ticket money. I could go for the morning show and return midday. So I went with her.

On the way she wanted to take a bus as it would be quicker. So I got into the bus. At a bus stop we got down and walked towards the theatre. (At least that is what I thought, since I did not know the theatre). She saw a woman standing near the door of her house and went to talk to her. I followed the elderly woman. I got caught in that house which was a brothel. They transferred me to a Bombay brothel. I was trying to escape from the brothel but could not. Recently one of the clients was good to me. He arranged for a police raid and I was able to get out of the brothel.

But, I cannot go home now. Society would not permit me to enter our area again. My parents would not take me either since I walked out of the house without their permission. I want to remain in Bombay itself. Perhaps, I can marry the boy who helped me to escape. Is it possible to get in touch with him? Is it possible to marry the boy? Perhaps he is already married.

(If the boy is unmarried Shakunthala decides not to marry him if he is not a Brahmin, as she is a Brahmin. She does not want to return home either.)

In Rajeshwari's case (see Chapter 7), who left home because she had no freedom to choose her marital partner and was forced to marry a boy chosen by her father, she decided to return to the brothel and teach a lesson to the brothel keeper for ruining her life. Further cultural practices such as seclusion and superstitions make them helpless when out of the house. In their efforts to find out their destination or assistance to reach home, they get exploited by those who pose as helpers. In the fourth phase when out of brothel, these girls who were referred to as 'prostitutes' often decide to remain in the institution of prostitution which is prepared to take them and which receives social sanction from society -- for the 'rejects' of the society.

8.4.5 Economic and cultural factors for the Scheduled Caste women and girls leaving their home

For the Scheduled Castes, their search for steady and better paying jobs often end by traffickers forcing them into prostitution. Sahila, an adolescent from Bihar, North India, was

interviewed in Bombay. She comes from the Scheduled Caste; in her fourth phase or destiny she looks forward to going home. Will it materialize? She relates:

Case history 37

I come from Bihar. My father worked as a coolie on a daily wage basis. He left home early in the morning in search of a job. If a job was offered he would bring home the day's wage and the family had our meals. However, during divali festival time, while trying to light a big cracker, it burst and burnt his palms. The flesh having burnt up, his palms became just twisted bones. He was unable to do any job with his hands. This resulted in unemployment. We began begging for our food. Our food was meager and our health was poor. Although I was around fourteen years I was weak and frail. However, a marriage offer came from neighbours and I was married to a young man.

My husband's family expected me to do all the household work as well as to work in the field on daily wage basis. This was a great strain on my health. I soon became pregnant and I was sent home for my first delivery to my parental home as per custom. I did give birth to a lovely baby boy [Sheetal wails for her child at this point. I remain with her in sorrow, supporting her. Despite my efforts I can not restrain my tears].

The babe began to grow. As my family is poor and my husband deserted me (by informing my parents that they would not be taking me back) I began begging once again for food. I wanted to give my child a better life than what I had. I did not want him to beg. So I decided to take up a job. A man promised to offer a job and forced me into prostitution. [Sheetal cries bitterly again]. I did not see my child again. The infant was on breast milk when this happened. I wonder how my child is. I hope nothing has happened to my child. I want to return home soon. Will I be deceived again on my way back?

8.5 PROSTITUTES' CHILDREN AND INSTITUTIONAL CARE SERVICES

Case history 38

Radha comes from an Upper Caste. She is in her mid twenties.

I am from the South. I was brought up in a well-to-do family. See here I am seated in this type of a surrounding. This is my son. The whole day he spends playing. I did go to admit him in school. But I was told to bring his father. How can I do that? I explained to the person who admits children that I am from the red light area (meaning I am a prostitute). Despite telling him that he insisted that I go and bring the man. So I could do nothing more.

Some of the women who are single (such as those separated, deserted, divorced, widowed or in prostitution) feel embarrassed when situations either in the school or religious services demand that the child's parents walk along with the child for a particular programme. A child who has only a mother who is in prostitution is often unable to do so or faces the humiliation of others getting to know the family situation. The single mother herself is made to walk alone before others.

As for institutional care for children, the institutions are generally granted registration on the basis of educating all castes, creeds, and backgrounds from which the girls' children come. However, due to the medium of education, a child might not get admission to a particular institution. While there may be other legitimate reasons for not admitting the child (judged from the point of view of the welfare and progress of the child), there are reasons such as non-acceptance because the child's mother is a prostitute. Children are considered as having in them the characteristics of the mother who is a prostitute and so refused the residential services the prostitute seeks. While agreeing that a child of a prostitute requires to be shown special love and care, perhaps privileges of a place where the child can complete the homework as the brothel is occupied at night, this is a need and discrimination. Prejudice against children of prostitutes often leaves them on the streets making them a vulnerable group for exploitation. Stigmatization of prostitutes leads to stigmatization of their children thus reproducing a cycle of repression and injustice.

Prejudices against prostitutes also exist. While there is food to be shared, often they are chased away by most people. In the case of Priya (case history 39) she could not find a place to stay when she was pushed out to the streets by the brothel-keepers.

8.6 PROSTITUTES CAST OUT BY SOCIETY

Case history 39

Priya comes from a Scheduled Caste and is 28 years old. She was interviewed in Bombay in 1988, on the outskirts of the city, in a low land that often gets flooded in the rain. A lonely spot, but for the passing trains.

I have been pushed out of a brothel by the brothel keeper after extracting all my health, strength, dignity and respect. The only place I could find is this low land that is deserted by people. This is very low land and in the rainy season it is like a big lake. This row of huts has been taken by women in prostitution as they have nowhere to go. Except for the numerous passing trains and clients no one ever comes to this place. Clients seldom come to me as I have severe tuberculosis (I bring up blood), and I have venereal disease too. If clients come I run with that money for some medicine to ease my pain. But they do not give much relief. This means that I starve and my health is growing weaker.

Other women in prostitution came to talk to me as I sat with Priya on a charpai (small cot with wooden frame and strings). The women began talking to me. In the meantime Priya brought a bottle of cola for me from a nearby shop. She insisted that I drink. I told her that she needed it...In the end some of us decided to share. Priya was radiant with joy. I was filled with joy too. All of us spoke of many things in joy while the trains passed up and down and the commuters stared at us. I did collect a few things for her, but within a few days I came to know that Priya had passed away.

8.7 PROSTITUTES OBLIVIOUS OF THEIR SURROUNDINGS

'Pearl' is a prostitute who has lost her memory, and wanders about. I met her during my field work in 1989 in Bombay. She was in her early twenties. She was picking up some food from the garbage thrown by the local people. I offered her some cool drink as it was extremely hot. Pearl gulped the whole thing fast and spoke in English. 'I like pink drink' she said. I told her that she was welcome to come any time for a pink drink. Her scanty clothes

were dirty and full of blood stains. Her hair in disarray. She began picking up a few things as she left the place.

8.8 THE RIGHT TO A PROSTITUTION-FREE SOCIETY

Violence, injustices, sexual exploitation, discrimination, dehumanization through commodification, ravages of diseases, marginalization, segregation, ostracism, evident in the life-histories of prostitutes in India are contrary to the values of human dignity, equality, fraternity, social justice and calls for prostitution-free society. Prostitution threatens social rights and solidarity among the people of the nation. It isolates and segregates prostitutes and those involved in the institution of prostitution from other members of the society. This situation challenges those who stand for prostitution on the basis of human rights. It seeks a new right still to be conquered -- a humane right that enables the dehumanized to regain their human dignity and live as citizens in solidarity with others.

8.9 RESPONSE TO THE SITUATION OF PROSTITUTION IN INDIA

Today, we recognize that if change is to be made possible, we will have to address ourselves to a multi-pronged approach to the situation of prostitutes in India. This approach will have to be imbued with love and compassion, care and sensitivity to the physical, mental, psychological and spiritual needs of prostitutes (see humanization in Chapter 1).

A constructive approach is needed to facilitate the restoration of human dignity. The problems the infant of a single mother faces, of being engulfed in the ethos of a culture and violence, being stigmatized as an 'ill-legitimate child', 'the child of a whore', 'a vagrant delinquent' need to be discouraged. Apart from just the social stigma, being vulnerable as a child, the economic inadequacy, the role models encountered, and early experiences do all

affect the child. And if it is a Scheduled Caste child, a further exploitation on the cultural basis is experienced. The child needs a multi faceted approach geared to his or her overall development. Women in prostitution need to be integrated (accepted) into the family. Equal opportunity ought to be given to the girl child in the Indian society for her healthy growth and development.

I believe that everyone can function as a catalyst in regard to their response to the situation of prostitutes, their children and those related to the institution of prostitution. The focus needs to take into account the thousands of men, women and children who supported by this institution. Shringari indicates her vision of how she will work out her liberation and that of prostitution in her milieu (see case history 40).

Case history 40

Shringari is a 15 year old Scheduled Caste girl from Madurai, Tamil Nadu.

Interviewed in an institution in 1985.

I am from Madurai. My father is a drummer. He has a job only at certain times when there are some announcements to be made -- such as when a person dies. He is sent for by the family of the deceased to go to specific areas and announce the name and time when the death occurred to a particular person, when and where the burial would take place etc. On these occasions he is paid a very small sum of money. My mother worked as a coolie. She was not accepted for work daily. I worked as a rag picker from childhood. In the morning people beyond our area threw away papers, bottles, broken aluminum plates, wires etc. I picked up these things and sold them for few paise (penny). The rest of the day I spent on the streets playing with the children in a similar situation in our locality.

Shortly I grew up, one day when I was at home, Raja (a youth in our neighbourhood) came home in a hurry and gave me the news that my aunt wanted me. He was prepared to help me out by offering to take me on his bicycle. I went along with him on his bicycle. On the way, he suddenly got down from the bicycle near a house saying that he had a message to pass on in that house. He told me to come along. I followed him into the house.

From this house I was transported to a Bombay brothel. For the past two years I have been forced into prostitution in the brothel. After my rescue I was brought to this organization. I wanted to go home, but they (this organization) are unable to trace my family.

[After narrating this Shringari remained silent for a long time. I wondered whether to remain quiet or intervene. These are situations in which the listeners are placed in a dilemma. This dilemma is not unique to biography, but occurs in social

Besides, this could lead to insights and discoveries, change and growth. It could shape forces that shaped their lives. So, after a while I said to Shringari: 'Shringari, would you like to sit quietly for a little longer?' Shringari sighed.]

I was just sitting beside you. It is a long time since I have heard my mother tongue. I was twelve years old when I left home. This is a strange land. How I long to go back to my native place. This organization could not trace my family. Our hutments are built of mud and clay with palm leaves and tins forming a thatched roof. They are not proper houses with addresses and numbers. Besides, they are situated in the outskirts of the city. It is not easy to find my place.

['In your place, are there signposts such as some statue, temple, name of a girl?']

Aio! I have made a big mistake. I forgot to tell this organization my pet-name 'Kuppu'. Everyone in the locality knows me by this name. The organization will have no problem now to find my house and my people. They will send me home. Once I get there people will follow me to my house wondering where I was all this time.

As soon as I begin telling them about Raja, my father will strike his forehead with his palm and say 'what a Karma' (fate or misfortune). He will bend down, pick up some sand and throw it in the air (symbolizing 'may such an individual be cursed. May he become like dust like the earth. Death wish on the person who has done the greatest harm'). Then he will hold his head with both his hands and sit leaning against the mud wall of our hut helplessly (unable to bear the situation, finding no solution).

My mother will strike her breast and on her stomach with both her hands and cry aloud. (On the one hand, she suffers for the child of her womb, the daughter whom she had brought to life and nurtured, flesh of her flesh, her very own. On the other hand, she regrets that that child of her womb should undergo such an experience. She wishes that she had not given birth to her. She feels guilty that she had not brought up her daughter as many of the women in her locality had done and given their daughters in marriage.) In this ambivalent consideration she beats her breast and stomach in love and concern as well as in despair and as a punishment. She will scream at Raja 'You dare come this way, I will smack you with the broom'. And the people surrounding us will say 'let him (Raja) come our way, we will spit at him'. We will ask him 'Are you a man?' He will not be able to walk with his head held high any more. They will warn their sons to behave rightly (according to the norms of the society), their daughters to be on their guard.

['At the mention of Raja all this happened. I wonder what will happen if you mention the rest of your experience -- for instance, about the people in the house where Raja took you.']

In our place if the boy is from the neighbourhood there will be a fight and beatings between both the parties. One party will insist the boy is not responsible, the girl should have had more sense. And the other party will insist that the boy is the culprit and Shringari is a victim. In the crowd some will try to beat up the boy, while the girl will get some thrashing too. If the noise generated at the community handling of the situation reaches a very high pitch, the police may turn up. If the (police) arrive there will be more beatings by them on the people of both sides, whether they were watching or fighting. So at the sight of their arrival (the police), all the people will run to the nearest huts. A silence will prevail. The police may return when order is maintained, or call for information. No one would leave their hut nor give any information for there will be more beatings in the police station for not providing more and more information that they do not have. After the police leave, all the people will go back to their own huts and resume normal life. But if the

return when order is maintained, or call for information. No one would leave their hut nor give any information for there will be more beatings in the police station for not providing more and more information that they do not have. After the police leave, all the people will go back to their own huts and resume normal life. But if the people concerned in the issue are from outside our segregated area all is kept quiet. Besides, I do not have the address of that house.

Certain areas in India where the Upper Castes live, the 'Untouchables' are forbidden to frequent. Due to earlier conflicts and adverse experiences, the 'Untouchables' generally keep away from approaching these areas. Shringari, who is a child according to the stages of development model in relation to social events of Stewart and Healyt (Lieblich/Josselson, (ed.), 1994:230-2) has assimilated the broad values and expectations of her community to social events and her experience is filtered through her own experience of life lived in her family and milieu. This situation is in keeping with the theories about the links between the socio-cultural context and personality development pointed out by Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950/1954). Shringari's approach, though effective in her community milieu, is a partial handling of the problem. It leaves the network that is involved in sexually exploiting the girls, the mode of transferring girls to Bombay from South India, untouched.

Besides, her father's reaction to her situation in striking his forehead indicates to her that it is the result of 'fate' that is already foreordained, referred to by some local people as already written on one's forehead. Hence striking the forehead. The throwing of the sand signifies that human beings are 'powerless to overcome these situations, it is the "power" that preordains such events alone need to intervene and take appropriate action for such a grave action that has befallen his daughter.' Thus the involvement of third parties and the girl's fourth stage or destiny was not adequately handled.

The mother's approach to the situation, on the one hand blaming herself and punishing herself, seems to be the result of perceiving the situation (destiny of her child) as the result of karma. She considers herself as having failed in her duty as a mother towards

her child. As a result she is being punished. However, she sees the hand of Raja in this situation as well. Her anger towards him awakes revenge. The girl is also seen as guilty for following Raja. And she regrets that such a girl should be born of her. It is her own karma. The mother beats herself.

The interview continues by asking Shringari:

[‘I suppose when you get the address you might change your mind (meaning she might take further action in relation to the people and their involvement in trafficking).] I might [Shringari smiles.] That’s great. [‘Once at home I wonder how you would spend your time?’] I will go to an institution similar to this in Madurai and learn in my mother tongue. I will take up a job. [We greet one another and leave.]

In the process of telling her life history, her hopes and visions, Shringari identified her limits (not giving her pet name and staying in the institution where a strange language is spoken and taught), as well as discovering her own strength that changed her own outlook towards her life and the growth of others around her. To her parents and the community she gradually brings insight that it is not ‘fate’ or ‘karma’ that is responsible but the doings of those here and now. Occurrences such as these (violence to women and girls of the Scheduled Castes) could be prevented through the action of the community.

To me as a researcher and learner the interview with Shringari brought about change. Hitherto I had perceived prostitutes who were trafficked and sexually exploited through prostitution as victims, as ‘powerless’ to redress their own situation. But the interview in the form of a multi-dimensional approach involving various methodologies of ethnography, interview techniques, case work process and counseling processes resulted in mutual change and growth to the interviewer and the interviewee. Thus by their very sharing, the women and girls in prostitution had functioned as catalysts in beginning transformation in society. As such they are ‘victors’.

While my observation during the interviews with prostitutes indicated the Upper Caste girls as alert to their situation, aggressive towards those who had exploited them,

even wanting to take revenge (case history 25) the non-Upper Castes were submissive, almost silent in their suffering (case history 26). While the Upper Caste prostitutes were somewhat healthy and searched or were able to plan their future, the non-Upper Caste girls, especially the Scheduled Castes, were extremely poor in their health conditions and had no plans or rather remained silent or silenced by their experience of sexual slavery, and often awaited death as they were far gone in health condition. Despite this major difference, prostitutes from all backgrounds had 'power' to redress their lives. Some (especially those in bondage and under sexual slavery) were unable to exercise it.

In relation to prostitution Joardar (1983:274), concludes that 'Prostitution would not, as some abolitionists expect, disappear. We cannot think that such a society would ever come where there is no prostitution. But we can think that there could be such a society where there is prostitution without exploitation and venereal disease.'

However, when the phenomenon of prostitution is examined closely, it becomes obvious that the basic and inalienable rights of those involved in prostitution are exploited for financial gains. The lives of prostitutes of this study illustrates prostitution as not something inevitable. Rather, it is the outcome of socio-cultural, religious, economic and political mechanisms (man and man-made structures prevalent in society), an outward sign of inward physical, mental, emotional and spiritual isolation. It is due to disruption caused by a developmental process leading to factors such as migration or much deeper through value erosion, lack of ethical standards in the moral fabric of the Indian society.

Having highlighted some of the characteristics of the institution of prostitution as an exploitative system (contrary to the above perception of visualizing prostitution without exploitation), this study also affirms that since prostitution is a creation of human society, it can also cease to exist when the society decides. Since sexual behaviour is a learnt behaviour, human beings have the potential to change their behaviour. When man really respects women, purchase of women as commodities cease. When women command

respect from men, they cease to be 'purchasable commodities'. If the policy makers are sincere in eradicating sexual exploitation in the country, prostitution cease. If those who implement the law in relation to prostitution carry out their role effectively, trafficking and organization of prostitution cannot survive. Women and girls will not fall victim to trafficking and abuse. If alternate methods of employment and sources of income are extended, those who live on prostitution would quit being attached to the institution of prostitution. Freeing women and girls from sexual slavery would enable them to develop and grow. To live in love there is a need to experience the love of God and one another. To begin with there is a need to build bridges among us. We need to join hands whatever our cultural background may be. For after all, we are all humans.

If love is true it refrains from seeing the loved one being destroyed. The existence of prostitution in India with its violent impact on women and children, will not be considered as a necessary evil. A society that does not need evil is necessary. Some categorize the dehumanized condition of prostitutes as the 'uncivilized'. Should a 'civilized society' not provide employment (means of income) for its women and girls other than through prostitution? Often people assume that the Scheduled Caste prostitutes experience satisfaction through their involvement in prostitution in India. On the contrary this study indicates violence in their lives. And it is not a trivial matter when it affects thousands of prostitutes, especially the Scheduled Castes, who form a significant proportion of the prostitute population in India.

Socio-religious and cultural anthropology does attempt to understand a human being in a particular socio religious and cultural milieu. Sociology analyzes a person in the context of the society in which he or she lives and ascertains the relationships, interactions and impact. These disciplines would have fulfilled their purpose if they could raise the hearts of people to love, respect and serve persons marred by culture and violence.

In relation to caste, has the society in India given everybody a chance to live, the possibility to develop and reach fulfillment? Liberty, equality and fraternity enshrined in our Constitution -- does this form part of our concern? Social inequality calls for deep careful thought in situations where the prostitutes of India have to end up like Shringari and Pearl. Are prostitutes received back in their homes? Do we need a group of people (referred to as 'rejects' of society) in our contemporary society? Culture (the institutions and systems such as prostitution) is the creation of society. The society that initiated it can also transform India into a prostitution free society. We can set models for the future generations.

8.10 TO SHAPE THE FORCES THAT RESHAPED THEIR LIVES

The prostitutes who have shared their lives to make this study possible (some of whom have passed away) were convinced that through their sharing of their experiences they have already started to reshape their lives as well begun to reshape the lives of those who shaped their lives. As enablers we are convinced that social change is seldom achieved by the few at the top alone. Often it is the people at the bottom of the pyramid who are the prime movers and function as the agents of change. In the context of culture and violence this refers primarily to the Scheduled Castes and women in prostitution (especially of the Scheduled Castes). In a spirit of listening, dialogue, and a deeper relationship, they need to be made the 'subjects' or 'primary agents of change' in the process of transformation. We, as enablers, could assist them profitably in their endeavours, which could involve strategies at the level of individuals (especially among those affected by culture and violence through prostitution), or as a corporate body through mass movements, towards their and our humanization as a society. In this joint venture, there is space for all people, from all socio-cultural, ethical, educational, economic and political backgrounds. The sharing by the prostitutes of their life experiences provides ample scope for future actions. Some of these

activities, along with the major findings and recommendations, are presented in Chapter 9 as the 'Conclusion' of this study.

PART III

Conclusion & Recommendations

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

Just as a cultural or caste hierarchy exists among prostitutes in India, there exists an hierarchy among typologies of prostitution in India. A comparison between the cultural hierarchy of prostitutes with the hierarchy of typologies of prostitution indicated some similarities and differences.

Where similarities are concerned, it was evident that the culturally 'high' upper caste prostitutes were involved in forms of prostitution such as 'escort girls' and 'call girls' which were considered as the topmost in the hierarchy of typologies of prostitution in India. The Scheduled Castes referred to as the lowest in the hierarchy of culture were also involved in forms of prostitution such as the 'sacred' prostitution and brothel-form of prostitution in red light areas, considered to be the lowest in the hierarchy of typologies of prostitution. Some of the women and girls from the 'caste not applicable' group functioned as 'cabaret artists' and 'disco girls' which were given a higher 'status' (than 'sacred' prostitution and brothel-form of prostitution in red light areas) under the title of 'recreation' and 'entertainment' programmes. Thus, a similarity between the cultural hierarchy of prostitutes and the hierarchy of typologies of prostitution exists.

However, in regard to their differences, it was found that some of the upper caste prostitutes were involved in brothel-form of prostitution in red light areas considered to be the lowest in the hierarchy of typologies of prostitution. A perusal of the Recruitment and Initiation phases in the life-histories of prostitutes indicated the involvement of traffickers, kith and kin. For instance, in the four year study that focused on India that is predominantly rural indicated 41.4 percent involvement of traffickers, and 32.1 per cent of kith and kin. The three-year study that was carried out in urban Mumbai highlighted 73.6 per cent

trafficking and 2.4 percent involvement of kith and kin. It was observed that the traffickers played a major role in the recruitment process both in rural and urban India, while the involvement of the kith and kin was predominantly in rural India. Despite this difference the traffickers as well as the kith and kin, were aware of the demands of the clients.

An analysis of the demands of the clientele highlighted the demand for virgins as their priority. While in the institution of marriage the would-be-bride was expected to be a virgin (a tradition prevalent in many communities) among the Scheduled Castes for the dedication and initiation as a 'sacred' prostitute that takes place in the context of 'marriage' ritual (often the bridegroom represented by a sword) the girl is expected to be a virgin. Thus, virgins form a protected group in India. However, when a girl (a virgin) is available (obtained by traffickers either through deceit, fraud or force) a high price is demanded from the clients. In the Indian society where the caste-class nexus exists, the culturally 'high' upper castes are also the economically high upper classes. As such the finding of this study is generally the first clients and in the case of 'sacred' prostitution the "patron" came from the upper caste/class clientele.

The analysis of the demands of the clientele further revealed of the existence of an hierarchy even among the clientele. The price required by traffickers, kith and kin is paid by the upper caste/class clients for the virgin, irrespective of her cultural background, who is deflowered and abused after which she is discarded. The belief of a virgin being auspicious (pure, fertile, free from venereal diseases) are some of the factors that play an important role apart from other dimensions (such as pleasure and exersion of power). After the girl has been used by the first client, she is passed on to other clients from lower cultural and economic backgrounds. Finally, the rejected girl (if not already infected by the first client with venereal disease, at this stage there is no escape for the girl in this regard) is made available for the lowest cultural and economic group in public places such as the red light

areas which form a convenient 'disposal system' for the 'throw-aways' of the Indian society.

The finding of this study (i.e. the involvement of the upper caste/class clientele forming the first clients or patrons and sexually exploiting the girl) led to the examination of some of the texts such as the Rig Veda 7.18.2; Aitareya Brahmana 3,23; Ashwamadha Parva 14,80; Manus 5.154; Adi Parva 1.160, towards discovering the attitude towards sexuality. A perusal of these texts indicated a preference given to the males in regard to sexual relations that goes beyond marital relations. If there is no transcendent truth obedience to which makes it possible for the upper caste/classes to satisfy their sexual desires according to a correct scale of values, then there is no principle for guaranteeing just relations between people. They can maintain that through their membership as Upper Caste/Classes by virtue of a deeper knowledge of the laws of development of society, they are exempt from error and can arrogate to themselves the exercise of power. Each will seek his satisfaction or the interest of his group with no regard for the rights and dignity of others – such as women, girls, the Scheduled Castes and the minority communities – who form part of the Indian society and are vulnerable to exploitation.

An examination of the Upper Caste women and girls in prostitution in relation to their recruitment and initiation phases indicated that they had left home due to cultural factors. They had challenged the double-standard morality in relation to sexuality that existed in the family and society. They preferred to leave their husbands who were involved in sexual excesses such as polygamous behaviour and bigamy. They preferred to be different by refusing to marry persons (men) whom they do not love, rather than lay stress on caste and marry a person not to their liking. They had experienced difficulties and rejection by their families by marrying or wanting to marry men of other castes or cultural background. If the sexual exploitation of the Upper Caste/Class women and girls through prostitution is to be avoided there is a definite need to work at this level of bringing about

transformation at a cultural level and prevent women and girls leaving their homes and getting into the clutches of traffickers and exploiters (at this stage). A more humane attitude should be taken towards transformation of men involved in sexual excesses, and women and girls should be respected and supported in their legitimate demands, such as their right to marry persons of their choice.

However, an examination of the Upper Caste/Class women in their brothel life and destiny phases indicated that at an earlier period of brothel-life they were enraged and struggled to get out of the brothel. With no hope of getting out of the brothel and out of sexual exploitation (within the institution of prostitution) and of non-acceptance by their families and society (outside of the institution of prostitution) they remain in brothels and continue prostitution. At a later stage they become 'Mistresses', concubines or brothel-keepers with the collaboration of Upper Caste/Class men, especially clients, for their survival. Once they become brothel-keepers they purchase and provide girls for clients. Thus, another finding of this study is the involvement of the Upper Caste/Class women in prostitution exploiting other women and girls through prostitution for economic reasons (at this period) thus contributing towards the perpetuation of prostitution in India. There is an urgent need for the Upper Caste/Class groups in India to be compassionate towards them, accept them within the family and in society so that they do not become agents of perpetuation of prostitution in India, but through the family and society's concern for them will enable them to grow and development with dignity in the milieu of the people their fundamental right.

An analysis of the Scheduled Caste prostitutes in relation to their recruitment stage indicated that the predominant factor for leaving their home is economic. Seasonal work with low wages, poverty and deprivation – ending in desperation has made them leave their homes in search of stable occupations and a steady income. However, in their search for jobs, they were misled by persons whom they assumed to be well wishers and to be

concerned of about their plight, and followed them. Being illiterates, penniless, they generally become dependant people. Once trapped within brothels they try their utmost to get out of the place. Violence inflicted on them, such as cutting their feet with sharp knives, makes them remain inside the brothel. Although at the initial stage they struggle to get out of brothels, with illiteracy (i.e. not knowing how to read the destination of buses, with no money to hand) the people whom they approach further exploit them. While the upper caste clients bring in more money to the brothel-keepers, the Upper Caste/Class 'prostitutes' are provided with good food and medical care. The prostitutes of this group are even allowed to receive gifts from clients (in cash and/or in kind) and use them for their personal needs. However, the Scheduled Castes and the other culturally 'low' women are segregated within brothel set-up, the Scheduled Caste girls called upon to do work considered as 'menial' even within the prostitution set up. As their clientele consists of the lowest economic group they bring a smaller amount to brothel-keepers. To overcome this situation numerous clients (whether ill or well) are thrust on these girls ruining their health. At the time of interview the Scheduled Caste 'prostitutes' were diseased. Some of them beyond recognition – covered with venereal diseases, cheap clothing stuck to their bodies with puss, blood stains, the hair on their head stuck to the skull. Some of them wailed, lamented at their experience or for their infants left behind at the time of trafficking. There were others who stood or sat stooped down while their tears flowed or in a state of shock. Are these women and girls of India born to be treated and subjected to such a high degree of violence in a country that proclaims non-violence? Are they not also created in the image of God, said to emanate from the divine, to be respected, with rights of their own? This study finds the Scheduled Caste women and girls in prostitution as experiencing a culture of violence not only in society prior to their entry, but worse still within the institution of prostitution. While the Upper Caste/Class women and girls are exploited by clients within prostitution to a great extent, the Scheduled Castes are exploited by women brothel-keepers

as well as by their clients, to a greater extent. This study that explored this caste factor in prostitution calls for the situation to be met with appropriate services immediately.

An highly educated upper caste woman (a friend of mine) stated that I am doing 'all this work' (my response to the situation of prostitutes) because I am in my last cycle of birth. She being a brahmin believes in rebirths. According to this belief the last cycle is the last re-birth (nearest to liberation or attainment of one's goal moksha) when, she believes, a person involves oneself in these services I carry out. The conditions of the prostitutes in India – especially the prostitutes of the Scheduled Castes – is an urgent situation that calls for immediate response of all. In its Christian tradition Jesus says to leave behind even some of our basic needs, not even to salute anyone on the way but to hurry, for the Mission that awaits us is urgent. The immediacy of the situation calls us to action here and now, in this generation, to liberate those bought and sold, enslaved through force into sexual slavery. To be on the side of the oppressed, the exploited – those who experience culture and violence through prostitution, and work towards their humanisation requires that we do not confine our services to those within our caste, creed or region alone but we reach out to those of other cultural, religious and regional background as well. As most of those recruited and initiated into prostitution are children (just after puberty) – another finding of this study – this vulnerable group needs immediate attention as well.

The girl child in Indian society is the most vulnerable. Through exploitative systems as it stands today, she is offered up by the Scheduled Caste adults through 'dedication' and initiation into prostitution to the Upper Caste/Class males who through extending cash and becoming "patrons" sexually exploit the girl child. The violence committed against the girl child is masked by culture through customs and practices, and 'sanctified' in the context of religious ritual. This, brings about a cultural 'harmony' between the two conflicting cultural groups (the Upper Castes and the Scheduled Castes) through the Scheduled Caste girl being made a 'sacrificial victim'. Unless and until the dynamics of these operations are

understood and acknowledged by the parties concerned, very little transformation can be brought about by enacting laws, and through various movements and services.

To the Scheduled Caste girls, instead of leaving their home and native regions in search of jobs, and getting into the clutches of traffickers, there is an urgent need for an economic system that follows an orderly development, is geared towards the common good, respects the dignity of all and moral laws, with special focus on those on the 'other side' of the society (such as prostitutes), and aims at keeping a balance between sectors such as agriculture and industrial. This would open up a wider range of employment, accommodating the various skills innate in people, especially the Scheduled Castes, and contribute towards their personal development as well as the overall development of the nation.

In the humanization process of prostitutes in India, especially the Scheduled Castes who formed the primary reference group of this study, all of us – the Government, the non-Governmental organisations, religious bodies, groups and individuals -- have a role to play.

The Good Shepherd Sisters in India (including myself) who have opted for the humanization of those considered to be on the 'other side' of society have an important role to play. Our upholding of the worth of every person (a person is worth more than this material world), means that our philosophy must bear fruit in our action. The immediacy of the situation of prostitutes in India, especially the Scheduled Castes, calls for a re-evaluation of our services in India and to bring them in line with our original charism as handed down to us by our Founders (St. John Eudes and St Mary Euphrasia Pelletier). Our experience of God's merciful love and compassion in our lives, involved with the power of love for the most marginalized and exploited (such as prostitutes) in our society should be made available to them. The area of our contribution as Good Shepherd Sisters in the Indian context should be chalked out. Following Jesus the Good Shepherd who said that He has come for the lost, and He lays down his life for his sheep, India needs not only the Good

Shepherd Sisters, but all who are motivated to do so, to take risks, to lay down their lives in response to this challenging call towards the humanization of the prostitutes, especially of the Scheduled Castes, in India.

Recommendations for changes in policy, legal measures for curbing sexual exploitation at all levels, topics for further research related to prostitution, and programmes in general for humanization of prostitutes (including health measures) and the need for authentic human development that keeps a balance of material development with spiritual progress, is provided under recommendations p.295.

NATIONAL EFFORTS: CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

Protection of Civil Rights, 1955

[Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955]

1. The fundamental rights pertaining to the abolition of untouchability:
 - i. Article 15 (1) prohibits 'the state' from discriminating against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. This right under Article 15 (1) is available to the citizens against the State only.
 - iv. Article 17 of the Constitution states, 'Untouchability' is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of 'untouchability' shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law.
 - v. Article 23(1) prohibits traffic in human beings and forced labour and thus aims at 'recognition and restoration of the dignity of man'.
 - viii. Under Article 32, any citizen whose fundamental rights, including the right against Untouchability under Article 17, are violated can move the Supreme Court directly by writ proceedings for the enforcement of the rights conferred by the Constitution. Public spirited individuals, lawyers, social workers, journalists and voluntary organizations can on behalf of the Scheduled Castes file Public Interest Litigation petitions in the Supreme Court under Article 32 or in the High Courts under Article 226 of the Constitution.
2. Directive Principles of State Policy for development of the Scheduled Castes:

- iv. Article 46 directs the State to promote with special care the interests of the weaker sections, especially of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and protect them from social injustice and exploitation.
3. Provisions in the Constitution to safeguard the interests of the Scheduled Castes:
- iii. Article 338 provides for appointment by the President of a special officer for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided for them under the constitution.
 - iv. Article 341 empowers the President to specify castes, races, or tribes to be Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes.

STATUTORY PROVIDERS

4. The relevant Act is the 'Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955', formerly called the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955.

5. The following practices on the ground of Untouchability are forbidden:

Enforcement of disabilities with regard to entrance and worship at temples, access to shops and restaurants; the practice of occupations and trades; use of water sources, places of public resort and accommodation; public conveyances, hospitals, educational institutions; construction and occupation of residential premises; holding of religious ceremonies; use of jewellery and finery etc.

Therefore those who compel a Scheduled Caste person to do any scavenging or sweeping; to remove any carcass or to flay any animal or to do any similar job on the ground of untouchability is an act forbidden under this Act and punishable according to law.

6. Inciting or encouraging the practice of untouchability is an offence:

If any person directly or indirectly, preaches untouchability or its practice in any form, or justifies its practice on historical, philosophical or religious grounds or on the ground of any tradition of the caste system or on any other ground, it is punishable according to the provisions of this Act.

7. An offence against untouchability can be tried summarily:

Every offence under the Act is a cognizable offence (i.e. a police officer can arrest the accused person without warrant). Every offence, except where it is punishable with imprisonment for a minimum term exceeding three months, may be tried summarily by a first class Judicial Magistrate. (For summary trials procedure is simple and so the case can be disposed of expeditiously.)

8. The 'burden of proof' in untouchability offence cases:

In criminal cases normally the accused is believed to be innocent until proved guilty, and the burden of proving the guilt is on the prosecution. However, in 'untouchability' offence cases, the burden of proof of innocence lies on the accused. In other words, when the victim is a member of a Scheduled Caste, the commission of a forbidden act under PCR shall be prima facie presumed to have been committed on the ground on 'untouchability'.

9. The duty of the State Government is to ensure the Enforcement of the Act.

ii. Specifies the measures the State must include.

10. Indicates what a Scheduled Caste person should do when an offence under this Act is committed against him.

INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS

The Preamble to the United Nations Charter reaffirms faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of human person in the equal right of men and women. One of the purposes of the United Nations is to achieve international co-operation in promoting respect for human rights and for fundamental freedom for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. U.N. Declaration of Human Rights provides that every one is entitled to all rights mentioned therein without distinction as race, colour, sex, language, religion etc. It gives the right to marry and to found a family to all men and women of full age. Article 23 of the Declaration provides for the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to production against unemployment, equal pay for equal work, just and favourable remuneration ensuring existence worthy of human dignity.

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

A Interview Schedule Serial Number: _____
B Place of interview (specify): (a) Institution _____
(b) Red Light area _____
(c) Any other (specify) _____
C Respondent Number: _____
D Name _____
E Date or Period of data collection _____

PART I: PRIOR TO ENTRY INTO PROSTITUTION

1. NATIVE PLACE

1.1 Name _____
1.2 Dont' know _____
1.3 N.A. _____

2. REGION / ADDRESS

2.1 Rural _____
2.2 Suburban _____
2.3 Urban _____
2.4 State _____
2.5 Country _____
2.6 Dont know _____
2.7 N.A. _____

3. MOTHER TONGUE

3.1 Bengali _____
3.2 Hindi _____
3.3 Kannada _____
3.4 Malayalam _____
3.5 Marati _____
3.6 Tamil _____
3.7 Telugu _____
3.8 Urdu _____
3.9 Any other (specify) _____
3.10 N.A. _____

4. CASTE

4.1 Upper Caste _____
4.2 Scheduled Caste _____
4.3 Caste - Neither Upper Caste
or Scheduled Caste _____

4.4 Caste not applicable

4.5 Caste don't know

4.6 N.A

5. RELIGION

5.1 Buddhist

5.2 Christian

5.3 Hindu

5.4 Jain

5.5 Muslim

5.6 Sikh

5.7 Zorastrian

5.8 Any other

5.9 N.A

6. EDUCATION

6.1 Formal (Specify)

6.2 Non-Formal (Specify)

6.3 Nil

6.4 N.A

7. LEVEL OF FORMAL EDUCATION

7.1 Below Std.I

7.2 Std.I to IV

7.3 Std.V to VII

7.4 Std.VIII to X, Matric or
Std.XI (S.S.L.C)

7.5 PUC I to PUC II

7.6 B.A/B.Sc./B.E

7.7 M.A./M.Sc./M.E

7.8 Any other

8. OCCUPATION

8.1 Agriculture

8.2 Construction Work

8.3 Domestic work (outside home)

8.4 Domestic Work (in the home)

8.5 Factory work

8.6 Any other specify

8.7 Not applicable

8.8 N.A

9. MONTHLY INCOME

9.1 In Cash (specify)

9.2 In kind (specify)

9.3 In cash & kind (specify)

9.4 Any other (specify)

9.5 Don't know

9.6 Nil

9.7 N.A

10. RANGE OF MONTHLY INCOME

10.1 Below Rs.100

10.2 Rs.100 to Rs.200

10.3 Rs.200 to Rs.300

10.4 Rs.300 to Rs.400

10.5 Rs.400 to Rs.500

10.6 Rs.500 to Rs.600

10.7 Rs.600 to Rs.700

10.8 Rs.700 to Rs.800

10.9 Rs.800 & above (Specify)

11. MARITAL STATUS

11.1 Married (lived with the husband before entry into prostitution)

11.2 Deserted

11.3 Separated

11.4 Divorced

11.5 Widowed

11.6 Unmarried

11.7 N.A

12. NUMBER OF CHILDREN

12.1 Male(s) living

12.2 Female(s) living

12.3 Male(s) dead

12.4 Female(s) dead

12.5 Nil

12.6 N.A

13. CARE OF CHILD(REN)

13.1 Self

13.2 Husband

13.3 Husband & self

13.4 Others (specify)

13.5 In an institution

13.6 N.A

14. CASTE OF PERSON(S) WHO CARE FOR CHILD (REN)

14.1 Upper Caste

14.2 Scheduled Caste

14.3 Neither Upper Caste nor Scheduled Castes (specify)

14.4 Caste not applicable

14.5 Don't know

14.6 N.A

15. HEALTH CONDITION

15.1 Good

15.2 Fairly Good

15.3 Casual illness (specify)

15.4 Periodic illness (specify)

15.5 Longterm illness (specify) _____

15.6 STD/AIDS _____

15.7 N. A _____

16. WHAT IS THE PRECIPITATING FACTOR THAT LED TO YOUR LEAVING YOUR HOME

16.1 Needfor a job/income _____

16.2 Left home to marry a youth _____

16.3 Lost the way,sought assistance _____

16.4 Marital disharmony _____

16.5 Dedicated (devadasi) _____

16.6 Contacted by traffickers _____

16.7 Co-operate with the
organizers of prostitution _____

16.8 Any other (specify) _____

16.9 N.A _____

17. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FAMILY AT THE TIME OF LEAVING HOME

17.1 Cordial _____

17.2 Somewhat cordial _____

17.3 Strained _____

17.4 Not applicable _____

17.5 N.A _____

18. AGE AT THE TIME OF LEAVING HOME

18.1 Age _____

18.2 Dont know _____

18.3 N.A _____

19. AGE RANGE

19.1 Below 16 years (child) _____

19.2 16 yrs to 18 yrs (minor) _____

19.3 18 yrs to 21 yrs (major) _____

19.4 21 yrs & above (adult) _____

20. INFORMATION FROM LEAVING HOME TO ENTRY INTO PROSTITUTION

PART II: ENTRY AND STAY IN PROSTITUTION

21. PLACE OF STAY (PRESENT ADDRESS)

21.1 Red light area (specify) _____

21.2 Any other (specify) _____

21.3 Don't know _____

21.4 N.A _____

22. MODE OF ENTRY INTO PROSTITUTION

22.1 Voluntary (self) _____

22.2 Lured _____

22.3 Conditioned (dancing girls) _____

- 22.4 Dedicated (devadasi/basavi)
- 22.5 Deceived/forced
- 22.6 Forced
- 22.7 Sold/forced
- 22.8 Deceived/sold/forced
- 22.9 Kidnapped/Abducted/Sold/forced
- 22.10 Any other
- 22.11 N.A

23. FIRST SEXUAL EXPERIENCE

- 23.1 In the context of prostitution
- 23.2 Within marriage
- 23.3 Outside marriage
- 23.4 N.A

24. IF WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF PROSTITUTION, FROM WHICH CASTE DOES THE FIRST CLIENT (THE PERSON WHO DEFLOWERED YOU) COME FROM?

- 24.1 Upper Caste/Class
- 24.2 Scheduled Caste
- 24.3 Neither Upper Caste Nor Scheduled Caste
- 24.4 Caste not applicable section
- 24.5 Don't know
- 24.6 N.A

25. IF YOU ARE CARRYING ON PROSTITUTION (NOT UNDER THE CONTROL OF ANY ONE), DO YOU RECEIVE ASSISTANCE FROM OTHERS [PERSON(S)] BY WAY OF PROTECTION ETC.?

- 25.1 Receive assistance
- 25.2 Do not receive assistance
- 25.3 Not applicable
- 25.4 N.A

26. TO WHICH CASTE/CLASS DO THE PERSON(S) WHO ASSIST YOU BELONG TO?

U.C/S.C/neither U.C or S.C/C.N.A/N.A

- 26.1 Person(s)
- 26.2 Don't know
- 26.3 N.A

27. IF YOU ARE FORCED TO CARRY ON PROSTITUTION UNDER THE CONTROL OF OTHERS [PERSON(S)], TO WHICH CASTE/CLASS DO THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) BELONG TO?

U.C./S.C./Neither U.C nor S.C/C.N.A./Don't know/N.A.

- 27.1 Landlord of brother(s)
- 27.2 Owner(s) of the girls
- 27.3 Brothel-keeper(s)
- 27.4 Trafficker(s)
- 27.5 Client(s)
- 27.6 Food Supplier(s)
- 27.7 Jeweller(s)

- 27.8 Saree seller(s) _____
- 27.9 Money lenders _____
- 27.10 Others (if any) _____
- 27.11 Don't know _____
- 27.12 N.A _____

28. DO YOU RECEIVE THE CASH PAID BY THE CLIENTS?

- 28.1 Yes, full amount _____
- 28.2 Yes, part of it (specify) _____
- 28.3 No _____
- 28.4 N.A _____

29. DO YOU RECEIVE ANY GIFTS (IN CASH OR KIND) DIRECTLY FROM THE CLIENTS?

- 29.1 In cash and in kind _____
- 29.2 Cash only _____
- 29.3 In kind only _____
- 29.4 Neither in cash nor in kind _____
- 29.5 N.A _____

30. DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER SOURCE OF INCOME?

- 30.1 Yes (specify the amount) _____
- 30.2 No. _____
- 30.3 N.A _____

31. DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN (NOT THOSE LEFT BEHIND PRIOR TO ENTRY INTO PROSTITUTION)?

- 31.1 Yes how many _____
- 31.2 No. _____
- 31.3 N.A _____

32. WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR CHILD(REN) WHILE YOU ARE IN THE BROTHEL (ARE THEY UNDER YOUR CARE)?

- 32.1 Under my care _____
- 32.2 Under the care of brothel-keepers _____
- 32.3 In an institution _____
- 32.4 Don't know their whereabouts _____
- 32.5 Not applicable _____
- 32.6 N.A _____

33. WHAT ARE YOUR ASPIRATIONS FOR YOUR CHILD(REN)?

- 33.1 Aspiration (s) specify _____
- 33.2 No aspiration (s) _____
- 33.3 N.A _____

34. WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS PROSTITUTION?

- 34.1 Good... _____
- 34.2 Bad.... _____
- 34.3 Indifferent _____
- 34.4 No comment _____
- 34.5 N.A _____

35. WHAT IS YOUR EXPERIENCE OF BROTHEL LIFE?

36. WHAT IS YOUR HEALTH CONDITION NOW?

- 36.1 Good _____
- 36.2 Fairly good _____
- 36.3 Casual illness _____
- 36.4 Periodic illness _____
- 36.5 Long term illness _____
- 36.6 STD / AIDS _____
- 36.7 Don't know the nature of illness _____
- 36.8 N.A _____

37. WHY DO YOU CONTINUE TO STAY IN PROSTITUTION?

- 37.1 Enslaved /guarded _____
- 37.2 Tried to escape, but did not succeed _____
- 37.3 No one to go to _____
- 37.4 Nothing can be done now, its too late,
no use, diseased,... _____
- 37.5 Family will not accept _____
- 37.6 Society will condemn _____
- 37.7 Dedicated / bonded _____
- 37.8 Any other _____
- 37.9 N.A _____

38. HOW OLD ARE YOU NOW? (AT THE TIME OF INTERVIEW)

- 38.1 Age _____
- 38.2 Don't know _____
- 38.3 N.A _____

39. AGE RANGE (AT THE TIME OF INTERVIEW)

- 39.1 Below 16 years (child) _____
- 39.2 16 yrs to 18 yrs (minor) _____
- 39.3 18 yrs to 21 yrs (major) _____
- 39.4 21 yrs & above (adult) _____

40. HAVE YOU ANYTHING TO TELL ABOUT YOUR LIFE AND EXPERIENCES?

41. WHAT IS YOUR EXPECTATION FROM SOCIETY?

{GENERAL REMARKS AND OBSERVATIONS MADE BY THE INTERVIEWER(S)}

APPENDIX III

THE ROLE OF CASTE IN PROSTITUTION: CULTURE AND VIOLENCE IN THE LIFE-HISTORIES OF PROSTITUTES IN INDIA

CONSOLIDATED DATA

Note:

Please refer to the interview schedule, Appendix II

A, B, C, D, E, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in this sample relate to questions A, B, C, D, E, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

a, b, c, 1.3, 2.3, 3.3, 4.3, 5.3, etc. relate to sub-divisions under the respective questions.

A	B	C	D	E	1
1 Andheri	c	A1	Karuna	87/90	Bangalore
2 Mulund	b	M1	Meenakshi	87/90	Velanganni
3 Mulund	b	M2	Prema	87/90	Thirunelveli
4 Mulund	b	M3	Vasanthi	87/90	Kumbakonam
5 Mulund	b	M4	Inbakani	87/90	Kumbakonam
6 Mulund	b	M5	Komala	87/90	Thirupathur
7 Mulund	b	M6	Kokila	87/90	Salem
8 Bhandup	b	BH1	Jayanthi	87/90	Virudachalam
9 Bhandup	b	BH2	Sunanda	87/90	Salem
10 Bhandup	b	BH3	Usha	87/90	Salem
11 Bhandup	b	BH4	Nusreen	87/90	Virudachalam
12 Bhandup	b	BH5	Sulochana	87/90	Bangalore
13 Bhandup	b	BH6	Vijaya	87/90	Salem
14 Bhandup	b	BH7	Surya	87/90	Salem
15 Bhandup	b	BH8	Sunitha	87/90	Salem
16 Bhandup	b	BH9	Kanthi	87/90	Salem
17 Bhandup	b	BH10	Anjali	87/90	Vaniampadi
18 Bhandup	b	BH11	Beena	87/90	1.3
19 Bhandup	b	BH12	Hema	87/90	1.3
20 Bhandup	b	BH13	Lakshmi	87/90	Salem
21 Bhandup	b	BH14	Padma	87/90	Krishnagiri
22 Bhandup	b	BH15	Kamala	87/90	Villipuram
23 Bhandup	b	BH16	Kannagi	87/90	1.3
24 Bhandup	b	BH17	Meenakshi	87/90	1.3
25 Bhandup	b	BH18	Adithi	87/90	Salem
26 Bhandup	b	BH19	Shyamala	87/90	Katpadi
27 Bhandup	b	BH20	Subhadra	87/90	Kymbakonam
28 Bhandup	b	BH21	Ruckmanie	87/90	Thiruvannamalai
29 Bhandup	b	BH22	Kala	87/90	Salem
30 Bhandup	b	BH23	Madavi	87/90	Thanjavur
31 Bhandup	b	BH24	Sridevi	87/90	Kumbakonam
32 Bhandup	b	BH25	Ranjani	87/90	Krishnagiri
33 Play House	b	PL1	Sundari	87/90	Thiruvannamalai
34 Play House	b	PL2	Julita	87/90	1.3
35 Play House	b	PL3	Mangala	87/90	1.3

A	B	C	D	E	1	
36	Play House	b	PL4	Chandra	87/90	1.3
37	Play House	b	PL5	Anusuya	87/90	Vilevani
38	Play House	b	PL6	Begum	87/90	1.3
39	Play House	b	PL7	Jagadeshwa	87/90	Salem
40	Play House	b	PL8	Shiela	87/90	1.3
41	Play House	b	PL9	Beena	87/90	1.3
42	Pahala Gulli	b	PG1	Renuka	87/90	Sivagasi
43	Pahala Gulli	b	PG2	Lalitha	87/90	Thiruvannamalai
44	Pahala Gulli	b	PG3	Kavitha	87/90	Thiruvannamalai
45	Pahala Gulli	b	PG4	Aruna	87/90	Avani
46	Pahala Gulli	b	PG5	Suguna	87/90	Salem
47	Pahala Gulli	b	PG6	Munia	87/90	Nagercoil
48	Pahala Gulli	b	PG7	Vijayanthimal	87/90	Thindivanam
49	Pahala Gulli	b	PG8	Pragasi	87/90	Trichy
50	Parel	b	P1	Vajreshwari	87/90	Pune
51	Parel	b	P2	Erramma	87/90	1.3
52	Parel	b	P3	Kumuda	87/90	1.3
53	Sion Koliwada	b	SK1	Anita	87/90	Trichy
54	Sion Koliwada	b	SK1	Sandhya	87/90	Cuddalore
55	Ghatkopar	b	GK1	Nusrath	87/90	Cuddalore
56	Ghatkopar	b	GK2	Deepthi	87/90	Chinna Salem
57	Ghatkopar	b	GK3	Meenambal	87/90	Khandivli
58	Ghatkopar	b	GK4	Valli	87/90	Pune
59	Ghatkopar	b	GK5	Shakunthala	87/90	Nasik
60	Ghatkopar	b	GK6	Saraswathi	87/90	Thanjavur
61	Ghatkopar	b	GK7	Arathi	87/90	Kholapur
62	Nagpur	a	N1	Thulsi	87/90	Aurangabad
63	Nagpur	a	N2	Sashikala	87/90	Varda District
64	Bombay/A.	a	BA1	Fatima	87/90	Chidambaram
65	Bombay/A.	a	BA2	Susheela	87/90	Thengaipattinam
66	Bombay/A.	a	BA3	Kamatchi	87/90	Malapadi
67	Bombay/A.	a	BA4	Banumathi	87/90	Tirupathi
68	Bombay/A.	a	BA5	Kadamba	87/90	Arakonam
69	Bombay/A.	a	BA6	Rajeshwari	87/90	Pillayarkuppam
70	Bombay/A.	a	BA7	Mala	87/90	Bijapur
71	Bombay/D.	a	BD1	Punitha	87/90	1.3
72	Bombay/D.	a	BD2	Sucharita	87/90	1.3
73	Bombay/D.	a	BD3	Radha	87/90	Thindivannam
74	Bombay/D.	a	BD4	Shaila	87/90	Arakonam
75	Bombay/D.	a	BD5	Anjali	87/90	Calcutta
76	Bombay/D.	a	BD6	Mumtaj	87/90	Calcutta
77	Bombay/D.	a	BD7	Swarnalatha	87/90	Bangalore
78	Bombay/D.	a	BD8	Reena	87/90	1.3
79	Bombay/D.	a	BD9	Lekha	87/90	Padker
80	Bombay/D.	a	BD10	Varalakshmi	87/90	Senji
81	Bombay/D.	a	BD11	Ruckmani	87/90	Thirupathur
82	Bombay/D.	a	BD12	Kusuma	87/90	Kalwandi
83	Bombay/D.	a	BD13	Shumsunissa	87/90	Dineshpur
84	Bombay/D.	a	BD14	Maragadham	87/90	Nasipura
85	Bombay/D.	a	BD15	Pushpa	87/90	Annakapathi

	A	B	C	D	E	1
86	Bombay/D.	a	BD16	Kuppamma	87/90	Sethnakotla
87	Bombay/D.	a	BD17	Rani	87/90	1.3
88	Bombay/D.	a	BD18	Nirmala	87/90	Cuddalore
89	Bombay/D.	a	BD19	Devi	87/90	Dindigal
90	Bombay/D.	a	BD20	Kalpana	87/90	Thirupathi
91	Bombay/D.	a	BD21	Reenabai	87/90	Shodpur
92	Bombay/D.	a	BD22	Manjula	87/90	Mangalore
93	Bombay/R.	a	BR1	Nurjahan	83/86	Salem
94	Bombay/R.	a	BR2	Geetha	83/86	Ramanagar
95	Bombay/R.	a	BR3	Kripa	83/86	Kolapur
96	Bombay/R.	a	BR4	Jyothi	83/86	Pune
97	Bombay/R.	a	BR5	Maramma	83/86	Vasumba
98	Bombay/R.	a	BR6	Asha	83/86	1.3
99	Bombay/R.	a	BR7	Aliah	83/86	Dharwad
100	Bombay/R.	a	BR8	Pragasi	83/86	Ahmednagar
101	Bombay/R.	a	BR9	Susma	83/86	Khatmandu
102	Bombay/R.	a	BR10	Sashi	83/86	1.3
103	Bombay/R.	a	BR11	Bhooshna	83/86	Gandhinagar
104	Bombay/R.	a	BR12	Angela	83/86	Goa
105	Bombay/R.	a	BR13	Veena	83/86	1.3
106	Bombay/R.	a	BR14	Shoba	83/86	1.3
107	Bombay/R.	a	BR15	Sringari	83/86	Bangalore
108	Bombay/R.	a	BR16	Sapna	83/86	Chawl
109	Bombay/R.	a	BR17	Maya	83/86	1.3
110	Bombay/R.	a	BR18	Roopa	83/86	1.3
111	Bombay/R.	a	BR19	Anu	83/86	1.3
112	Bombay/R.	a	BR20	Leela	83/86	1.3
113	Bombay/R.	a	BR21	Swarna	83/86	Cuddalore
114	Bombay/R.	b	BR22	Anju	83/86	1.3
115	Bombay/R.	b	BR23	Neethu	83/86	1.3
116	Bombay/R.	b	BR24	Deepa	83/86	1.3
117	Bombay/R.	b	BR25	Kiran	83/86	Bhairava
118	Bombay/R.	b	BR26	Mumtaj	83/86	1.3
119	Bombay/R.	b	BR27	Sheethal	83/86	1.3
120	Bombay/R.	b	BR28	Shabana	83/86	1.3
121	Bombay/R.	b	BR29	Munjamma	83/86	Marimukapalli
122	Bombay/R.	b	BR30	Preethi	83/86	1.3
123	Bombay/R.	b	BR31	Sharadha	83/86	Arakonam
124	Bombay/R.	b	BR32	Rohini	83/86	Madras
125	Bombay/R.	b	BR33	Shantha	83/86	A.P.

.... / cont'd

Appendix III (cont'd) PART 2

A	2	2.4	2.5	3	4	5
1	2.3	Karnataka	India	3.9	4.2	5.2
2	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
3	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.2
4	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
5	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
6	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
7	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
8	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
9	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
10	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
11	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.8	4.4	5.5
12	2.3	Karnataka	India	3.3	4.1	5.3
13	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
14	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
15	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
16	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
17	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
18	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
19	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
20	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
21	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
22	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
23	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
24	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
25	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
26	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
27	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
28	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
29	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
30	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
31	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
32	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
33	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
34	2.1	Andhra Pradesh	India	3.7	4.2	5.2
35	2.1	Andhra Pradesh	India	3.7	4.2	5.2
36	2.1	Andhra Pradesh	India	3.7	4.2	5.2
37	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.2
38	2.1	-	Bangladesh	3.8	4.4	5.5
39	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.2
40	2.7	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.2
41	2.1	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.3
42	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
43	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
44	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
45	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
46	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
47	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
48	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3

A	2	2.4	2.5	3	4	5
49	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
50	2.1	Maharastra	India	3.5	4.1	5.3
51	2.1	Andhra Pradesh	India	3.7	4.2	5.3
52	2.1	Andhra Pradesh	India	3.7	4.2	5.3
53	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.2
54	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
55	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.5
56	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
57	2.3	Maharastra	India	3.5	4.2	5.3
58	2.3	Maharastra	India	3.5	4.2	5.3
59	2.1	Maharastra	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
60	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
61	2.1	Maharastra	India	3.5	4.2	5.3
62	2.3	Maharastra	India	3.5	4.1	5.3
63	2.3	Maharastra	India	3.5	4.2	5.3
64	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.8	4.2	5.5
65	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.8	4.2	5.5
66	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
67	2.1	Andhra Pradesh	India	3.7	4.2	5.3
68	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
69	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
70	2.1	Karnataka	India	3.3	4.2	5.3
71	2.1	Andhra Pradesh	India	3.7	4.2	5.3
72	2.2	Bihar	India	3.2	4.2	5.5
73	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
74	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
75	2.7	West Bengal	India	3.1	4.1	5.3
76	2.7	West Bengal	India	3.8	4.4	5.5
77	2.1	Karnataka	India	3.3	4.1	5.3
78	2.1	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.9
79	2.1	-	Nepal	3.12	4.1	5.3
80	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
81	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
82	2.1	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.1
83	2.1	-	Bangladesh	3.8	4.4	5.5
84	2.1	Karnataka	India	3.3	4.2	5.3
85	2.1	Andhra Pradesh	India	3.7	4.2	5.3
86	2.1	Andhra Pradesh	India	3.7	4.2	5.3
87	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
88	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
89	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
90	2.1	Andhra Pradesh	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
91	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.4	5.3
92	2.1	Karnataka	India	3.3	4.1	5.3
93	2.7	Tamil Nadu	India	3.8	4.4	5.5
94	2.7	Andhra Pradesh	India	3.7	4.2	5.3
95	2.1	Maharastra	India	3.5	4.2	5.3
96	2.7	Maharastra	India	3.5	4.2	5.3
97	2.1	Maharastra	India	3.5	4.2	5.3
98	2.1	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.3

A	2	2.4	2.5	3	4	5
99	2.1	Karnataka	India	3.8	4.4	5.5
100	2.7	Maharashtra	India	3.5	4.2	5.3
101	2.7	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.1
102	2.1	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.1
103	2.1	Karnataka	India	3.6	4.2	5.5
104	2.7	Goa	India	3.11	4.2	5.2
105	2.1	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.9
106	2.1	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.9
107	2.3	Karnataka	India	3.6	4.2	5.3
108	2.3	Andhra Pradesh	India	3.7	4.2	5.5
109	2.1	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.3
110	2.7	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.3
111	2.7	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.3
112	2.7	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.3
113	2.7	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
114	2.1	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.9
115	2.7	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.9
116	2.7	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.3
117	2.3	-	Nepal	3.12	4.4	5.9
118	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.8	4.4	5.5
119	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.8	4.4	5.5
120	2.1	Tamil Nadu	India	3.8	4.4	5.5
121	2.1	Andhra Pradesh	India	3.7	4.2	5.3
122	2.7	Andhra Pradesh	India	3.7	4.2	5.3
123	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.1	5.3
124	2.3	Tamil Nadu	India	3.6	4.2	5.9
125	2.7	Andhra Pradesh	India	3.7	4.2	5.3

APPENDIX IV

THEY ARE HUMAN LIKE YOU AND ME

Friend, I speak on behalf of
the voiceless,
the unborn bartered by the underworld,
the unborn offered up to gods and goddesses
doomed to a life of sexual slavery --
the unborn conditioned by tradition
to carry on a life of prostitution --
the unborn infected with disease,
the blind, the still born --
devoid of father's love, unwanted, abandoned.

Friend, I speak on behalf of
the confused, the cheated, the deceived --
thousands of children kidnapped, sold, resold,
whisked away from their homes
to be transplanted in the dens of flesh trade
at a tender age --
thousands devoid of a husband or a family
and discriminated at all levels.

Friend, I speak on behalf of
the victimized, the trapped, the harassed --
the branded, the mutilated, the tortured
the molded, the shaped
to suit the lust of sexual exploiters.

Friend, I speak on behalf of
the dehumanized, the defiled, the raped,
the ostracized, the 'out caste', shunned by society,
stigmatized as 'crazy', made to roam on the streets --
denied of love, home, why --
even temporal and spiritual needs.

Friend, I speak on behalf of
the psychologically disturbed, the depressed,
the shocked, the silenced --
the deserted, the lonely, the bonded, the disadvantaged,
exploited at their work place.

Friend, I speak on behalf of
the living 'dead'
For they say 'We are like dead people --
Look where we are confined -- a grave yard
with no quarter in society.

We believe in God but not in man,
For though human he is inhuman,
And the future? It means nothing to us --
we are better dead than alive.'

Friend, I speak on behalf of
the dead --
in homes, work place, on streets
in lodges and hotels
slapped, trampled, kicked and battered
for refusing to trade their bodies.
the tiny flames of their hope to linger
flickered and died in silent hurt
their yesterdays have all ceased to exist
driven to suicide --
the valiant preferred to be strangled to death
in safeguarding their human dignity.

Friend, I speak on their behalf
a father selling his daughter for two bottles of liquor --
a step-mother exchanging her daughter for a saree --
an infant raped by a trusted friend --
a child mutilated by her adult husband --
a teenager raped, married to be forced into prostitution --
thousands tortured in the brothels --

Friend, I ask on their behalf
Are they chattels, robots, commodities or objects
that need to be controlled, subjugated, exploited
to be sold, resold several times
in the flesh markets for male utility?

We have talked together --
ate, laughed and cried together --
when painful experiences were beyond words could express --
we had remained in silent embrace.

Friend, I speak on their behalf
They are human like you and me,
persons with body, mind and soul,
born to live with human dignity.
Though broken in body -- shattered in mind --
though betrayed in love --
they long to be loved.
For love, if true, is the only answer my friend --
For they are human like you and me.

Sr. Rita Rosario R.G.S.

APPENDIX V

THE HOLISTIC APPROACH

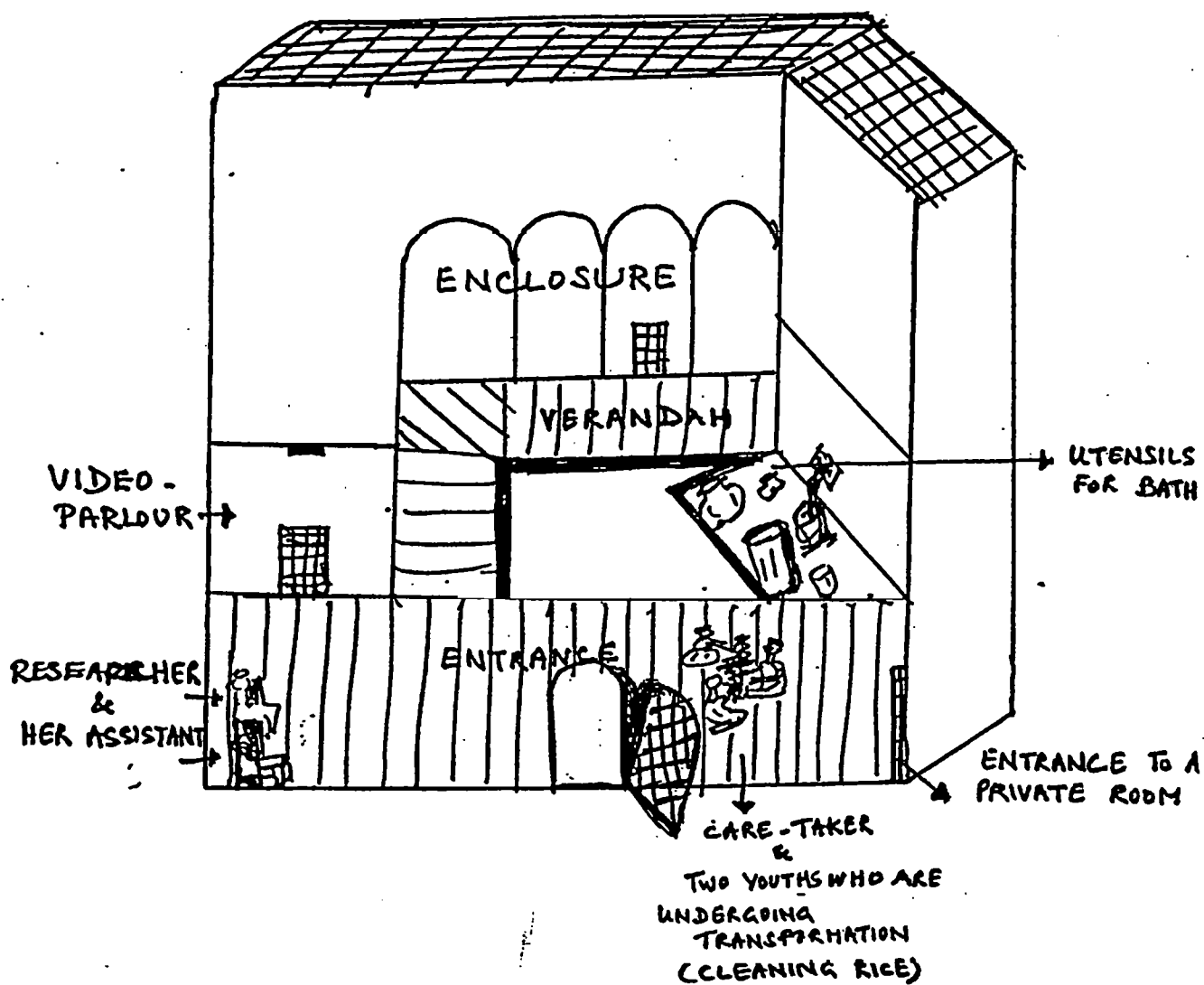
According to the Vedas, there are five tenets that underlie Hinduism. A. Ramiah clarifies these five tenets as follows:

The first tenet is the concept of 'Brahman', considered to be the unchanging reality that pervades the entire cosmos. The vedic seers saw that everything in the universe changes and they called the creation Samsara, that which always moves. They also perceived that behind this change was an unchanging spectrum from which the changing worlds emanated like sparks from a great fire. The second tenet emphasizes the point that as the changing universe outside is pervaded by the Brahman, the changing world within man himself is based upon the undying 'Atman'. The human entity is born again and moving towards the possibility of perfection. The third tenet is the realization of the vedic seers through their spiritual insight that the Atman and the Brahman are essentially one. The fourth major tenet of Hinduism, is that having established the existence of Brahman, Atman and their relationship, the supreme goal of life lies in spiritual realization whereby the individual becomes aware of the deathless Atman within him. 'Karma' is the fifth important tenet of Hinduism. Karma is a concept that includes actions, the individual is bound by the results of his actions, pleasant fruits flowing from good deeds and unpleasant consequences from evil ones. What we are today, is the result of our past deeds and at the same time we are the makers of our future by the way we act at present. The Hindus believe in reincarnation with the Atman being reborn in a long series until the attainment of liberation. (Quoted in Massey, 1994:77-8).

APPENDIX VI

RECEPTION CENTRE

TIME OF VISIT: MIDDAY 1988



APPENDIX VII

THE IMPACT OF THIS STUDY ON MY LIFE

This study brought me in direct contact with people in prostitution (in particular women and children); those related to the maintenance of this institution (such as the organizers of prostitution and brothel-keepers, traffickers and pimps); specialists from various disciplines (such as politicians, the formulators of laws, law implementors, people in charge of prisons, of supreme courts, directors of health and women and child welfare, media personnel, etc.). While communication with these people broadened my vision and provided a better understanding of the functioning of this institution of prostitution, the situation of the prostitutes themselves was an extremely painful experience. I often prayed to God to send me aid so that I could help them; I extended services within my ability. Several times I wanted to give up the study and continue my service. However, realizing the greater service a study of this nature could effect, I continued the study. What was beyond my ability to serve, I extended to them through referral to other existing organizations. Writing poems (see Appendix IV) was one of the ways of coping with the dehumanizing situation of prostitutes. I actively participated in meetings and conferences, in programmes that involved activity as well as in standing in silence in the heart of the city to uphold human dignity and avoid violence in society.

The above experience did not dampen my love and concern for prostitutes and those related to the institution of prostitution. I realize every one is a person needing recognition, love and care. For to work towards a society free from prostitution (i.e., people no longer being purchased as commodities for sex) the overall context of the institution (not just prostitutes) has to be addressed. My concern for the prostitutes has deepened, and extended

to other sections of the institution of prostitution. All the people whom I have met in the course of my study have in some way or other enabled me to become a better person, to renew my commitment.

Today, I see the future with hope and conviction that people are all basically good, irrespective of our diversity. I am not alone in responding to the desperate situation of prostitutes (especially the Scheduled Castes) and those related to the institution of prostitution in India. My role is to respond generously with others to this cause, especially in unison with those most dehumanized through prostitution in India.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Cultural oppression and violence in the lives of prostitutes in India calls for a new society based on the humanization of all people.
- 2 The 'person' becomes the centre and not his or her background. It means considerations such as social status based on ethico-cultural, educational, political, and economic affiliations, or possessions, should not form the priority.
- 3 A person becoming the centre means that priority is given to the marginalized (women) and the exploited (the Scheduled Castes) and those neglected by society (prostitutes), who are not in the main stream of life.
- 4 The implementation of the above vision in present times calls for a revolutionary transformation in Indian society that is based on values acceptable to contemporary Indian society.
- 5 Ahimsa or non-violence is a value acceptable to Indians. A revolutionary transformation should adopt a technique of non-violence.

- 6 The techniques of this non-violent struggle are to be studied through research, tested and adopted. However, the dimension of love, fellowship and acceptance of one another should form the basic premise.
- 7 No revolution will succeed unless it becomes a mass movement. The people, especially the vulnerable and the victimized, need to be conscientized, involved and become subjects (not objects) in their humanization process.
- 8 Although dependency on other nations is discouraged under the concept of 'self reliance' and 'authentic development' by a few scholars, in the light of the international links of prostitution in India, inter-dependency in eliminating culture oppression and violence in the lives of prostitutes who form the marginalized, the exploited and the neglected group, should form an important aspect.
- 9 Indian society as it stands today is noted for its hierarchical structure and group loyalties. These should be overcome by partnership and participation, sharing and mutual inter-action.
- 10 The role of women in their own emancipation calls for solidarity among themselves (irrespective of ethico-cultural, educational, political and economic backgrounds) in combating their common problems, such as those based on caste, gender and sexuality.
- 11 Through a joint venture Indian women need to address the urgent and critical issue of sexual exploitation and abuse of Indian women through prostitution, at local, national and international levels.
- 12 The joint venture of women must adopt appropriate methods relevant to the Indian situation and women's conditions in discussing issues pertaining to their lives, in organizing, planning and carrying out of mass movements.
- 13 Mere equalizing of property need not necessarily result in treating people equally. Analysis and cultural actions should aim at structural changes. From a long term

point of view it is only structural changes that can eliminate patriarchal institutions like prostitution.

- 14 Since the vested interests are constantly exploiting the ignorance and illiteracy of the people, it is necessary to build up legal awareness and provide information to help them to resist such exploitation and violence. Legal aid can thus generate power and confidence within the suffering masses to organize themselves effectively.
- 15 Conscientizing the marginalized and exploited sections needs to highlight the discrepancy embedded in giving the lie to, and violating, constitutional rights.
- 16 Laws that consider objectification and commodification of persons over 18 years as not illegal need to be combatted.
- 17 Legal aid groups and social action groups should collaborate in the mass movement through participation and extending necessary assistance.
- 18 The existence of Lok Nyayalaya or the People's Court for extending quick, inexpensive and impartial justice should be made known to the people through the media.
- 19 Social education should form an important aspect in media programmes towards bringing about a transformation in attitudes and disseminating the knowledge of human rights.
- 20 People's movements and action groups need a realistic understanding of the relationship between human rights and power.
- 21 Justice cannot be achieved without a shift in the power structure, without levelling the power through a reversal of forces. It is not just food for the hungry, but the power to ensure their share of what is available that must form the focus.
- 22 In addition to combatting sexual exploitation and abuse at all levels in society, women also need to ensure the right for a safe society in which they can live and move without fear.

- 23 The current law as well as its implementation indicates that its effectiveness had not been satisfactory in curbing trafficking in women and girls for prostitution in India. As such, the law relating to trafficking must be tightened. Provision must be introduced to penalize police who exhort sex favours from prostitutes and bribes from the organizers of prostitution.
- 24 In relation to the sale and purchase of persons for prostitution, the Act must incorporate explicit provisions for disciplinary action at the point of selling and buying persons for prostitution.
- 25 Vigilance by special squads of police needs to focus on prostitution in India.
- 26 Adequate amounts of personnel and finances for implementing the law must be provided.
- 27 Need for Government and Non-Governmental Organizations to collaborate in working towards the abolition of sexual exploitation of women and girls through prostitution is essential.
- 28 The efficacy of the implementation of the law in this regard could be enhanced by the constitution of a statutorily recognized mandatory citizens' committee, area wise, to oversee its implementation.
- 29 The jurisdiction of the proposed citizens' committees should coincide with that of the administrative authorities constituted to implement the Act in each particular area.
- 30 The committee must consist of not less than five full time paid members consisting of social workers, lawyers, representatives of local mens' and womens' organizations, and health personnel (with experience in helping women in distress) who must be appointed by the State Government.

- 31 The committee must be empowered to give evidence against traffickers in court and of policemen who harass women in prostitution, and to verify the antecedents of persons claiming guardianship rights of girls under the Act.
- 32 The committee must be empowered to welcome information on trafficking from the public, detect, report, and put pressure on the police to raid, arrest and follow up the prosecution and conviction of traffickers.
- 33 They can refer runaway children, and prostitutes who wish to leave prostitution, to rehabilitation centres.
- 34 Society should accept those girls who wish to leave the system and provide vocational training aiming at their economic independence. Private and public concerns should provide them employment on a priority basis.
- 35 Services in rehabilitative institutions should include counselling, psychotherapy, vocational and occupational training, education and recreation programmes. Socialization with persons with values different from groups encountered earlier by the prostitutes must be encouraged.
- 36 Scope for marriage, and assistance for their children and any other dependents to find adequate means of livelihood, should be provided.
- 37 In the rehabilitation process, understanding and compassion should take priority over discipline and punishment.
- 38 Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations need to open institutions for prostitutes, create an atmosphere of feeling of welcome and acceptance, and a flexible programme suited to the well and the not so well.
- 39 In combatting prostitution, education must be based on scientific knowledge, not on misconceptions and myths about human sexuality, femaleness or venereal diseases. Social health and legal education for the public should be carried out through TV programmes.

- 40 Combatting prostitution must not be left to the police, religious leaders, social workers, politicians, etc. The expert opinion of sociologists, social anthropologists, physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, sexologists, counsellors, psychotherapists and social workers, who have done research, or have empirical knowledge, must be sought.
- 41 Taking note of sexist advertisements promoting tourism which appear in your newspapers and magazines, and protesting against them. Demanding the withdrawal of sexist hoardings that promote tourism. A campaign must be carried out so that in the near future it is possible to wipe out sale and purchase, and sexual exploitation of women through prostitution, especially of the Scheduled Castes.
- 42 The girls must not be forced to marry people unacceptable to them. Thorough investigations should be made of the would-be bridegroom to avoid instances such as bigamy, and work towards abolishing double standard morality.
- 43 In restructuring the existing unjust social system and transformation, the male oriented values that form the sexist roots of prostitution need to be considered.
- 44 Research findings need to reach people so that they become aware of the contemporary situations of violence in the lives of prostitutes, especially of the Scheduled Castes, and work towards its prevention, as well as the rehabilitation of prostitutes in India today.
- 45 Research from the perspective of other groups involved with the institution of prostitution, such as the clients, eunuchs, the organizers and traffickers, the kith and kin of prostitutes, the children of prostitutes, and the law implementors, need to be taken up.
- 46 To bring about transformation through global pressure, media campaigns, and organizational support (passing resolutions at congresses) to initiate 'the beginning of the end' of culture and violence in the lives of prostitutes in India.

I have faith in the people of India and believe that if each of us play our part well, the situation of women and girls in prostitution, especially the Scheduled Castes, will cease. With faith in our hearts we begin our task.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Acton, William, in *Prostitution*, edited by Peter Fryer (The Fitzroy edition [n.p.], 1857).
- Adler, Alfred, *Individual Psychology* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1932).
- Amalorpavadass, D.S. (ed.), *The Indian Church in Struggle for a New Society* (St.Paul's Press Training School, Bangalore, 1981).
- Ambedkar, B.R., *Annihilation of Caste* (Bheem Patrika Publications, Jallundur, 1968 (1970 edition)).
- , *Emancipation of Untouchables* (Hosadikku Prakashana Publication, Bangalore, India (1992)).
- , *Mr. Gandhi and the Emancipation of Untouchables* (Bheem Patrika Publications, Jallundur, 1943 (1970 edition)).
- , *The Untouchables* (Tacker & Co. Ltd. Bombay, 1945).
- Anant, S.S., *The Changing Concept of Caste in India* (Vikas Publications, Delhi, 1972).
- Ardener, Shirley (ed.), *Defining Females: the Nature of Women in Society* (Berg Publishers Limited, Providence, 1993).
- Baelz, Peter, *Ethics and Belief* (Sheldon Press, London, 1977).
- Bagwe, Anjali, *Of Woman Caste: The Experience of Gender in Rural India* (Zed Books Ltd., London, 1995).
- Ballhatchet, Kenneth, *Race, Sex and Class Under the Raj* (Vikas Publishing House, Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1979, Carmelot Press Ltd., Southampton, 1980 and Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980).
- Banerjee, D.N., *The Draft Constitution of India: A Critique* (A. Mukerjee, Calcutta, 1948).
- , *Our Fundamental Rights, Their Nature and Extent (As Judicially Determined)* (The World Press Private Ltd., Calcutta, 1960).
- Barnes, Harry Elmer and Howard Becker, *Social Thought from Lore to Science* (Dover, New York, 1961; Boston, 1938).
- Barry, Kathleen, *Female Sexual Slavery* (New York University Press, New York, 1979; Prentiss Hall, New Jersey, 1976).
- Basham, A.L., *The Wonder that was India* (third revised edition, Sidgwick and Jackson, London, 1975).
- Basu, D.D. (ed.), *Commentary on the Constitution of India* (Vol.1.V, S.C.Sarker Ltd., Delhi, 1973 (1976 edition)).

- Basu, N.K. and S.N. Sinha, *History of Prostitution in India* (Bengal Social Hygiene Association, Calcutta, 1929).
- Beer, William R., *The Unexpected Rebellion: Ethnic Activism in Contemporary France* (University Press, New York, 1980).
- Benjamin, Harry and R.E.L. Masters, *Prostitution and Morality: A Definitive Report on the Prostitute in Contemporary Society* (The Julian Press, New York, 1964).
- , *The Prostitute in Society* (Mayflower-Dell Paperbacks, Mayflower Books Ltd., London, 1966).
- Berger, Peter and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (Penguin Books, London, 1984 (1976 edition)).
- Beteille, A., *Caste, Class and Power: Changing Patterns of Stratification in a Tanjore Village* (Oxford University Press, Delhi (1991 (1966 edition))).
- , *Castes: Old and New* (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1969).
- , *Inequality Among Men* (Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1977).
- Bhatt, A., *Caste, Class and Politics: An Empirical Profile of Social Stratification in Modern India* (Manohar, Delhi, 1975).
- Blaschko, A., *The Problem of Prostitution* (published in the Berliner klin, Wochenschrift, 1892).
- Burrow, T., edited by Basham, A.L., *The Early Aryans, A Cultural History of India* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1975).
- Caplan, Pat (ed.), *The Cultural Construction of Sexuality* (Routledge, London, 1987).
- Chesser, Eustice, *Live and Let Live* (William Heinemann Limited, London, 1958).
- Cobb, John Chandler, *The Application of Scientific Methods to Sociology* (Chapman, Boston, 1934).
- Cohen, Morris R., and Earnest Nagel, *An Introduction to Logic and Scientific Method* (Harcourt Brace and World, New York, 1934).
- Colaabawala, Capt. F.D., *Sex Slaves of India* (Orient Paperbacks (a division of Vision Books Private Limited), Delhi, 1981).
- Correia, Alberto S. and Germano, C., *India Portuguesa; Prostituição e Profilaxia, Anti-Venerea, Historica, Demografia, Etnografia Higiene e Profilaxia* (Tipografia Rangel Bastora, 1939 and 1963).
- Crooke, W., *The Tribes and Caste of the North-Western India* (Vol. IV, Cosmo Publication, Delhi, 1975).

- Das, Bhagwan and James Massey, *Dalit Solidarity* (Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Publication, Delhi, 1995).
- Das, Ram, *Socio-Economic Transformation of Millions through Rural Development* (Twenty-first Century Publishers, Meerut, 1986).
- Das, Somen, *Christian Ethics and Indian Ethos* (ISPCK; Printsmen, New Delhi, 1994).
- D'Cunha, Jean, *The Legalization of Prostitution* (Wordmakers, CISRS Publication, Bangalore, 1991).
- Delacoste, F. and Alexander, P., *Sex Work: Writings by Women in the Sex Industry* (Virago Press, London, 1987).
- Desai, A.R. (ed.), *Rural Sociology in India* (Bombay, 1959 (1978 edition)).
- Devasahayam, V., *Dalit and Women* (Navashakthi, Madras, 1992).
- Dharma Theertha, Swami, *History of Hindu Imperialism* (Nandan Offset Press, Madras, fifth edition, 1992 and N. Samuel, 1969).
- Dietrich, Gabriele, *Women's Movement in India, Conceptual and Religious Reflections* (Breakthrough Publications, Bangalore, 1991).
- Dube, Leela, Eleanor Leacock and Shirley Ardener, *Visibility and Power: Essays on Women in Society and Development* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1986).
- Dubois (Abbé) J.A., *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, (3rd ed., Clarendon, Oxford, 1906).
- Dumont, L., *Homo Hierarchicus* (Vikas, Delhi, 1970 and Paladin, London, 1972).
- Einstein, Albert, *Relativity: The Special and General Theory* (Holt; Methuen, New York, 1920).
- Elliot, Mabel and Francis Merrill, *Social Disorganization* (Harper Brothers Publishers, New York, 1950).
- Ellis, H., *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* (Random House, 1936; F.A. Davis, Philadelphia, 1937).
- Engels, Friedrich, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (a reprint with an introduction from E.B. Leacock, Surrey, Unwin Brothers Limited, 1981 [International Publishers, New York, 1942]).
- Fernandez, Walter and Philip Viegas, *Participatory and Conventional Research Methodology* (Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, 1985).
- Ferriani, Enger, *Minorenni Delinquenti* (Publication Centre [n.p.], 1881).
- Freire, Paulo, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Penguin Books, London, 1972).

- Frazer, Dr. J.C., 'Adonis, Attis, Osiris' (1907, cited in Joardar, Biswanath, *Prostitution in Historical and Modern Perspective* (Inter-India Publication, New Delhi, 1983)).
- Fryer, Peter (ed.), *Prostitution* (The Fitzroy Edition, MacGibbon & Kee Limited, London, 1968).
- Gagnon, J.H and William Simon, *Sexual Conduct - The Social Sources of Human Sexuality* (Hutchinson, London, 1974).
- Geertz, Clifford, *Religion as a Cultural System, the Interpretation of Cultures* (Fonta Press, London, 1993).
- Ghose, S., *Socialism, Democracy and Nationalism in India* (Allied Publishers, Bombay, 1973).
- Ghosh, A., *Caste Idiom for Class Conflict: Case of Khanjawala* (a report from Marathwada, pp.184-6, 1979).
- Ghosh, J.N., *Social Evil in Calcutta and Method of Treatment* (City Press, Calcutta, 1923).
- Ghurye, G.S., *Caste and Race in India* (Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1969).
- Giddens, Anthony, *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies* (Polity Press, Cambridge, 1992).
- Gimenez, M., 'Structural Marxism on the Women Question', in *Science and Society* (Vol. 42, Fall [n.d.], Falling Wall Press, Bristol).
- Glover, B.A., *The Sacred Fire* (University Books, New York, 1958).
- Glover, Edward, *The Abnormality of Prostitution in Women* (ed. A.M. Krish, Dell Publishing Company Inc., New York, 1958).
- Gokhale, B.G., *Ancient India, History and Culture* (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1959 (1952 edition)).
- , *Study of Prostitution in Pune* (Paper published in Samaj Seva, January, 1955).
- Goode, William J. and Paul K. Hatt, *Methods in Social Research* (International Student Edition, Mcgraw-Hill International Book Company, Tokyo, 1981).
- Greenwald, Harold, *The Call Girl - A Social and Psychoanalytical Study* (Ballantine Books Inc., New York, and Elek, London, 1958).
- Hardy, Friedhelm, *The Religious Culture of India: Power, Love and Wisdom* (Cambridge University Press, 1994).
- Harlan, Lindsey and Paul Courtright (eds.), *From the Margins of Hindu Marriage: Essays on Gender, Religion and Culture* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1995).
- Helpach, *Prostitution and Prostitute* (Berlin, 1905).

- Henriques, Fernando, *Stews and Strumpets - A Survey of Prostitution* (McGibbon and Kee, London, 1961).
- Hunter, Albert, *Symbolic Communities: The Persistence and Change of Chicago's Local Communities* (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1974).
- Hussain, Amir, *Meet the U.P. Tribes* (The Academic Press, Gurgaon, 1982).
- Hutton, J.H., *Caste in India* (Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1963 (1977 reprint)).
- Joardar, Biswanath, *A Study of Prostitution in the Industrial Area of West Bengal* (1976).
- , *Prostitution in Historical and Modern Perspective* (Inter-India Publication, New Delhi, 1983).
- Jordan, Glenn and Chris Weedon, *Cultural Politics* (Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, 1995).
- Joshi, Barbara R., *Untouchable!: Voices of the Dalit Liberation Movement* (Selectbook Service Syndicate, New Delhi, 1986).
- Kananaikil, Jose (ed.), *Scheduled Castes and the Struggle against Inequality* (Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, 1983).
- Kapur, Promilla, *The Life and World of the Call Girls in India: A Socio-Psychological Study of the Aristocratic Prostitute* (Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1978).
- Kakar, Sudhir, *The Inner World: A Psycho-analytical Study of Childhood and Society in India*, Second Edition (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1981).
- Karras, Ruth Mazo, *Common Women: Prostitution and Sexuality in Medieval England* (Oxford University Press, 1996).
- Kelly, D.M. (ed.), *Deviant Behaviour* (St Martin's Press, New York, 1979).
- Khare, S.C., *Human Rights and United Nations* (Metropolitan Book Co. Private Ltd., 1977).
- Kingsley, David, *Prostitution in Contemporary Social Problems* (ed. Robert K. Merton and Robert A. Nisbert, New York, 1963).
- Kinsey, Alfred C., Wardell B. Pomeroy, et al., *Sexual Behaviour in Human Female* (Philadelphia, Saunders, 1953 (1948 edition)).
- Kuhn, A. and A. Wolpe (eds.), *Feminism and Materialism: Women and Modes of Production* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1978).
- Lemert, E.M., *Social Pathology: A Systematic Approach to the Theory of Sociopathic Behaviour* (MacGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1951).
- Lester, James, D., *Writing Research Papers* (seventh edition, Harper Collins College Publishers, New York, 1993).

- Lewis, David C., *The Unseen Face of Japan* (Monarch, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, 1993).
- Liddle, Joanna and Joshi Rama, *Daughters of Independence* (Zed Books Ltd., London, 1986).
- Liebllich, Amia and Ruthellen Josselson (eds.), *Exploring Identity and Gender* (Sage Publications, USA, 1994).
- Lombroso, Cesare, *La Donna Criminale e Prostituta, trad. in Polaco* (Varsovia, Cohn, 1895).
- Lundberg, George A., *Can Science Save Us?* (Longmans, New York, 1947).
- Malinowski, Bronislaw, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1922).
- Maliekal, John, *Caste in India Today* (St.Paul's Press Training School, Bangalore, 1991).
- Mancini, Jean Gabriel, *Prostitutes and their Parasites*, trans. from French by D.G. Thomas (Elek Books, London, 1963).
- Mannhardt, W. (1875), in Joardar, Biswanath, *Prostitution in Historical and Modern Perspective* (Inter-India Publication, New Delhi, 1983).
- Mannheim, K., *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1952, original work published in 1928).
- Mantegazza, *Sexual Relation of Mankind* (Talstaff Press, New York [n.d.]).
- Manucci, Niceolo, *Storia do Mogor (Moghul India)*, trans. William Irvine (J. Murray, 1907-8).
- Massey, James (ed.), *Indigenous People, Dalits: Dalit Issues in Today's Theological Debate* (The Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Delhi, 1994 (1991 edition)).
- (ed.), *Indigenous People: Dalits* (Cambridge Press, Delhi, 1994).
- Mathew, P.D., *Cultural and Educational Rights of the Minorities* (Indian Social Institute Publication, New Delhi, 1992).
- , *Social Justice Cell* (Indian Social Institute Publication, New Delhi, 1992).
- , *The Dowry Prohibition Act 1961* (Indian Social Institute Publication, New Delhi, 1993).
- Mathew, P.D. and P.M. Bakshi, *Women and the Constitution* (Indian Social Institute Publication, New Delhi, 1990).
- Mathew, P.D. and T. Chacko, *The Law on the Abolition of Untouchability* (Indian Social Institute Publication, New Delhi, 1992).

- , *The Rights of Wife, Children and Parents for Maintenance* (Indian Social Institute Publication, New Delhi, 1993).
- Mathew, P.D. and Lata Krishnamurti, *The Minimum Wages Act 1948* (Indian Social Institute Publication, New Delhi, 1992).
- Mathur, A.S and B.L. Gupta, *Prostitute and Prostitution* (Ramprasad and Sons, Agra, 1965).
- May, Geoffrey, 'Prostitution', in *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* (Vol.XI - XII, McMillan and Free Press, New York, 1934).
- Mckeganey, Neil and Marina Barnard, *Sex Work on the Streets: Prostitutes and their Clients* (Open University Press, London, 1996).
- Mead, M., *Male and Female* (Mentor Books, New York, 1949; Penguin Books, 1962).
- Merton, Robert K., *Social Theory and Social Structure* (Free Press, Glencoe, III, 1949).
- Midha, Seema, *Immoral Traffic Prevention Act 1986 (Amended S.I.T. Act)* (Indian Social Institute Publication, New Delhi, 1992).
- Moffatt, Michael, *An Untouchable Community in South India, Structure and Consensus* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1979).
- Moti, Chandra (1976), quoted in Joardar, Biswanath, *Prostitution in Historical and Modern Perspective* (Inter-India Publication, New Delhi, 1983).
- Mukherjee, Santosh and J.N. Chakraborty, *Prostitution in India* (Das Gupta & Company, Calcutta, 1933).
- Myrdal, Gunnar, *An American Dilemma* (Vol.1, Appendix 2, Harper, New York, 1944).
- Namboodiripad, E.M.S. and Ajit Roy in John Maliekal, *Caste in India Today* (St.Paul's Press Training School, Bangalore, 1991).
- Northedge, Andrew, *The Good Study Guide* (The Open University, Milton Keynes, 1990).
- Oldberg, Oda, *Poverty in the Domestic Industry of Making Ready-Made Clothing* (n.p., 1896).
- Pappritz, Anwat, *Economic Causes of Prostitution* (1903).
- Parent-Duchatelet, A.-J.-B. *De la Prostitution dans la Ville de Paris* (1836, 1857).
- Parsons, Talcott, *The Structure of Social Action* (Mcgraw-Hill, New York, 1937).
- Perkins, R. and Bennett, G., *Being a Prostitute: Prostitute Women and Prostitute Men* (George Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1985).
- Pheterson, Gail (ed.), *A Vindication of the Rights of Whores* (The Seal Press, Seattle, 1989).

- Planck, Max, *The Philosophy of Physics*, trans. W.H. Johnson (Norton, New York, and G. Allen and Unwin, London, 1936).
Allen and Unwin, London, 1936).
- Ploscowe, Morris, *Sex and the Law* (newly revised and enlarged edition, Ace Books Inc., New York, 1962).
- Powdermaker, Hortense, *Stranger and Friend: The Way of an Anthropologist* (Secker and Warburg, London, 1967).
- Punekar, S.D. and Kamala Rao, *A Study of the Prostitutes of Bombay, With Special Reference to Family Background* (Allied Publishers, 1962).
- Punit, A.E., *Social System in Rural India* (Sterling Publishers, Delhi, 1978).
- Rachewiltz, Boris de (1964), in Joardar, Biswanath, *Prostitution in Historical and Modern Perspective* (Inter-India Publication, New Delhi, 1983).
- Rao, M.S.A., *Social Movements and Social Transformation* (Macmillan Company, Delhi, 1979).
- Reinharz, Shulamit, 'Feminist Biography, the Pains, the Joys, the Dilemmas', in *Exploring Identity and Gender*, ed. Amia Lieblich and Ruthellen Jossellen (Sage Publications, London, 1994).
- Reinharz, Shulamit and Lynn Davidman, *Feminist Methods of Social Research* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1992).
- Rossiaud, Jacques, *Medieval Prostitution*, translated by Lydia G. Cochrane (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1988).
- Rozario, Rita assisted by Javed Rasool and Pradeep Kesari, *Trafficking in Women and Children in India - Sexual Exploitation and Sale* (Uppal Publishing House, New Delhi, 1988).
- Sanger, William W., in *History of Prostitution* (The Medical Publishing Co., 1898).
- Sarkar, N.K., *Social Structure and Development Strategy in Asia* (People's Publishing House, Delhi, 1978).
- Scott, George Ryley, *Far Eastern Sex Life: An Anthropological, Ethnological and Sociological Study of the Love Relations, Marriage Rites and Home Life of the Oriental People* (Gerald G. Swan, London, 1943 (1936 edition)).
- Selvanadhan, S., *Status of Scheduled Castes* (Asia Publishing House, New Delhi, 1989).
- Sharma, K.L., *The Changing Rural Stratification System* (Orient Longman, Bombay, 1974).
- Sharma, R.N., and R.K. Sharma, *Social Anthropology and Indian Tribes* (Ranga Bharati, Bombay, 1983).

- Silbert, M., *Sexual Assault of Prostitutes* (San Francisco: Delaney Street Foundation, 1981).
- Singer, Milton and Bernard Cohn (eds.), *Structure and Change in Indian Society* (Aldine Publishing Company, Chicago, 1968).
- Singh Y., *Social Stratification and Change in India* (Manohar, Delhi, 1977).
- Sinha, A., *Class War, Not Atrocities Against Harijans* (in EPW, pp. 2037-40, 1977).
- Smart, Carol, *Women, Crime and Criminology: A Feminist Critique* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1977).
- Sorokin, P.A., *Society, Culture and Personality* (Harper, New York, 1947).
- Southwold, Martin in Lewis, David C., *The Unseen Face of Japan* (Monarch, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, 1993).
- Srinivas, M.N., *Caste in Modern India* (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1962 (1977 edition)).
- , *Social Change in Modern India* (University of California, 1966 and Orient Longman, Bombay, 1972).
- Stronmberg, C., *Prostitution: A Socio-Medical Study* (Stuttgart, 1899).
- Swarup, Jagadish, *Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms* (Tagore Law Lectures, H.M. Tripathi, Bombay, 1975).
- Tarnowsky, Benjamin, *Prostitution and Abolitionism* (Hamburg and Leipzig, 1890).
- Tarnowsky, Pauline, *Études Anthropométriques sur les Prostituées et les Voleuses* (1898, first published in 1887).
- Thampu, Valson, *AIDS, Heresy and Prophecy* (Theological Research and Communication Institute India, New Delhi, 1993).
- Truong, Thanh-Dam, *Sex, Money and Morality: Prostitution and Tourism in South East Asia* (Zed, London, 1990 (Amsterdam, 1988)).
- Tylor, E.B., *Primitive Culture* (London, 1871, reprinted Harper, New York, 1958).
- Vagiswari, Alladi, *Income Earning Trends And Social Status of the Harijan Community in Tamil Nadu* (Sangam Publishers, Madras, 1972).
- Vidhyadhar, Agnihotri, *Fallen Women* (Maharaja Printers, Jwala Bhavan, Gualtoli, Kanpur, 1955).
- Wake, I. Staniland, *Serpent Worship and Other Essays* (1888).
- Weber, Max, 'Class, Status and Party', in Bendix, R. and Lipset S.M. (eds), *Class, Status and Power* (Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 2nd edition, 1967).

Webster, John C.B, *The Dalit Christians, A History* (Printsman, New Delhi, 1992).

Weeks, Jeffry, *Sexuality* (Ellis Horwood Ltd., Tavistock Publication, London and New York, 1986).

Weid, D. von der and Guy Poitevin, *Roots of a Peasant Movement: An Appraisal of the Movement Initiated by the Rural Community Development Association* (Shubhada-Saras Publications, Pune, 1981).

Westermarck, Edward, *History of Human Marriage* (McMillan and Co. Ltd., London, 1921-25).

Yalman, Nur, *Under the Bo Tree: Studies in Caste, Kinship and Marriage in the Interior of Ceylon* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967).

RELIGIOUS BOOKS

The Vedas; the Rig Veda; Bhagawad Gita;
The Puranas; Kath Upanishad; Bhrahma Vaivarta, Prakriti Khanda (16, 52);
The Epics (The Mahabharata and the Ramayana); Manu Smriti.

The Koran.

The Holy Bible.

REPORTS, NEWSLETTERS AND PUBLICATIONS:

Asian Regional Conference Report, 'Exploitation of Women and Children; Its Causes and Effects' (Vishwa Yuvak Kendra, New Delhi, 1989).

Awasthi, Surinder, 'Prostitution: Nationalization is the only Solution', *Caravan* (April (First) 1983).

Atyachar Virodh Samiti Report, *India Today* (1-15, October, 1978).

Babb, Lawrence A., *Marriage and Malevolence: the Uses of Sexual Opposition in a Hindu Pantheon* in *Ethnology* (vol. 9: pp. 137-48, 1970).

'Banhi': An Occasional Journal of the Joint Women's Programme, India, 1981/2.

Cain, Bonnie J., 'Participatory Research: Research with Historic Consciousness' in *Participatory Research: Working Papers* (Canberra: Asia South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education, pp. 17-36, 1976).

Census Report (India, 1991).

Commission of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, *Report, 1977-78*.

Das, Veena, 'Masks and Faces: an Essay on Punjabi Kinship' (contributions to *Indian Sociology* n.s.10, 1-30, 1976).

Eardley, Glenn, 'Prostitution in the Western Suburbs: A Close-up', *Suhurhia* (31, May - 6 June, 1986).

'From the Third World to Sexual Slavery', *Times of India* (October 10, 1984).

Gibbens, T.C.N., 'Juvenile Prostitution' in *British Journal of Delinquency* (Vol. VIII, 1957-58).

Hornblower, Margot, 'The Skin Trade', *Time* (June 21, 1993).

Hussain, Amir, 'The Kolta: A Study in the Ethnography of the Poor', in *Eastern Anthropologist*, vol. 28, no. 4, pp. 367-79, 1975.

Hutchinson, Wood, *The Economics of Prostitution* (in American Gynaecological and Obstetric Journal, 1895).

Hutton, *Census of India (1931), India - Part I, Report* (New Delhi, 1933).

Joardar, Biswanath, 'A Sociological Study of the Prostitutes in Vizag', in *Anthropological Survey of India Bulletin* (Vol.XXIII, No.1-2, Government of India, Calcutta, 1974).

Khokar, Mohan, 'Dancing Feet, Bejewelled, Spelling Out Untold Rhythms, Mysteries...' in *The Statesman*, Delhi issue, 1983.

Kingsley, David, 'The Sociology of Prostitution', *Sociological Review* (2:5, October, 1937).

Kohli, Suresh, Pradeep Shinde and Jean D'Cunha, 'Bombay by Night' in *The Illustrated Weekly of India* (October 31, 1982).

Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 'Anthropology: Its Achievements and Its Future,' *Current Anthropology*, 12 (1966).

Mukherjee K. and M. Kala, 'Bhojpur: The Long Struggle', in *Mainstream* (nos. 45 & 46, 1978).

Namboodiripad, E.M.S., 'Caste, Class and Parties in Modern Political Development', *Social Scientist* (November 1977).

National Policy for Children (Government of India Publication, Ministry of Social Welfare, New Delhi, 1979).

Omvedt, G., 'Class Struggle or Caste War?', *Frontier* (September 30, 1978).

Patankar, B. and G. Omvedt, 'Kanjhawala', in *Frontier* (December 2, 1978).

Patil, S., 'Struggle for a New Line', in *Mainstream* (No.39, 1978).

Probe India (November 1985).

'The Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on U.N. Decade of Women: Equality, Development and Peace' (Copenhagen, 1980).

Richard, E., *La Prostitution a Paris* (1890).

Riti, M.D., 'Continuing Crusade', *The Illustrated Weekly of India* (November 22, 1987).

Serrill, Michael S., *Time* (June 21, 1993).

Social Welfare (No.5 August, 1991).

Stewart, A.J. and J.M. Healy, tr., 'Linking Individual Development and Social Change' in *American Psychologist*, 44, pp. 30-42, 1989.

The Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women & Girls Act, 1956 (Delhi Law House, 1982).